POLYHEDRON™

Newszine Issue 24

RPGA NETWORK

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This issue's cover depicts the Grond Family and their friends, a clan of ogre and half-ogre characters played by Roger and Georgia Moore. For detailed descriptions of these fine, upstanding citizens, see the feature article on page 30. Cover art by Roger Raupp.

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NEWSZINE

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Notes From HQ

News for June

Have you noticed that this issue is fatter than usual? We've expanded our usual 32-page size for this issue only in order to present the first installment of Frank Mentzer's "Needle", complete with the pregenerated characters used in the tournament version at GEN CON® 17 Game Convention.

Our other features for June include Roger Moore's "New Rogues Gallery", which describes the nice family on the cover. (The one on the left bears a striking resemblance to Roger — I wonder....nah, it couldn't be.) Jon Pickens continues the "New Spells" series with some nifty magic-user spells; and tournament winner Steve Null shares his techniques for getting votes in "Secrets of Success". Best of all, this issue marks the beginning of not one, but two new columns; member Errol Farstad will be contributing regular game reviews, and Michael Przytarski will be sharing his judging experience in "Fletcher's Corner". Any commentary on their advice is welcome, as are requests for coverage of specific subjects or games.

Submissions

Speaking of feedback, I'd like to thank all of you who have responded to the request in Issue #22 for member submissions. All the material we have received WILL appear in upcoming issues; we have not rejected a single article. But even now, only a fraction of the so-called active membership has contributed. What about the rest? The Newszine is your chance to talk to over 8000 other gamers worldwide; so let's all get in on the act!

If you need ideas, check out this issue's articles. We'd love to make "New Rogues Gallery" a regular feature, so if you have a clan, NPC, or favorite character you'd be willing to share, write it up, including as much detail as you can, and send it in! And what about the rest of you high-level players out there? Steve Null surely doesn't know all the "Secrets". How about some tips from other star players, like Dave Kelly, Randall Lemon, Neil Maruca, Kelley Foote, and Steve Glimpse?

Artwork is welcome too; and it's a great chance to get your work in print.

Bugs in Our System

Did you have to wait a long time for your membership packet to arrive? When it did come, did the card have an expiration date less than 1 year away? Honest, we aren't trying to cheat you; the problem is in our system. Each new membership entered on computer is automatically assigned an expiration date 1 year from the date of entry. But cards, ceritficates, etc. are made up by hand in "batches" and shipped out by 3rd class bulk mail. Consequently, some cards shipped in the last few months may have been as much as two months old by the time they reached their owners.

If your membership was one of those in question, rest assured that we already know who you are, and that steps are being taken to correct the problem and make sure it won't happen again. It's going to take a little time to make all the necessary changes in the computer system, though.

It should also be mentioned that your subscription(s) and your membership are different animals. The 1-year membership and 1-year subscription to POLYHEDRON™ Newszine that you get for the standard $12 membership fee currently start and end at different times; the membership starts first, followed by the subscription a couple of months later. (Each issue must be ordered from the printer well before its release date.) That means that your sixth issue will probably arrive AFTER the expiration date on your card, whether or not you renew.

Conventions & Tournaments

RPGA™ Network clubs across the country and around the world are making use of the tournament program. If you're interested in holding a sponsored event at a local convention, write to HQ with your request. Include as many details as possible, such as date, site, expected attendance, game system and number of rounds desired, and any other pertinent information. We will send you instructions and a suitable scenario, and advertise the event in the Newszine free of charge.

There are more great tournaments than ever to choose from this summer. Gary Gygax's new module "Isle of the Ape" will make its debut for RPGA™ members at Glathricon 85 in Evansville, Indiana; then a second appearance at Origins in Maryland. Origins will also feature the latest UK module, "Dark Clouds Gathering" as the Open event (also worth Network XP). GEN CON 18 Game Fair will feature not one, not two, but *three* AD&D® Tournaments for members only: two by Frank Mentzer, and a special premiere of the long-awaited T2 module. (And if that still isn't enough for you fantasy buffs, Snowcrystal is a sponsored event this year.) Also featured will be a STAR FRONTIERS® module by Tracy Hickman, Merle Rasmussen's "Operation: MELTdown" (from the soon-to-be-published TOP SECRET® Game Companion), "Glacier", a GAMMA WORLD® module by the famous Jim Ward, and a never-before-seen MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ adventure! There are still many judging slots open; call HQ for information if you're interested.

Attendees of GEN CON® 18 Game Fair please note: Contrary to what the instructions appear to say, you MAY sign up for as many RPGA Network events as you wish.

Congratulations to all the tournament winners from the last few conventions. RPGA Network events were held at Jaxcon South in Florida, Capcon in Ohio, and Tippicon in Indiana. All events were well attended, except for Jaxcon's. Our thanks to Steve "S.G." Null who put the Jaxcon event together for us on such short notice, Doug Behringer, who coordinated the Capcon event, and Bob Blake, who handled the Tippicon tournament. The following folks came out on top:

Convention	1st Place	2nd Place	3rd Place
Jaxcon South	Mark Troisi	John Bennie	David Garner
Capcon VIII	David Harshbarger	Roger Anderson	Tim Riegel
Tippicon '85	Steve Hardinger	Ken White	Kevin Quigley

Food for Thought

Want to promote the hobby in your area? How about holding a tournament (or even a whole convention) for charity? You could help others and show the community what gamers are really made of at the same time.

'Til next ish!

Letters

A Notable Absence

As a new member, I have received three or four of your publications. May I say that the "Dispel Confusion" section in Issue #23 is one of my all-time favorites. I personally have cherished my crayon since the day I received my MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ Game set.

I realize your main concern is the D&D® Game. Boy, I've know some individuals that eat up your game sets like folks like me do a copy of the X-Men™. But as an evolving MSH role playing game junkie, I often wonder if that game will be featured in the text of your publication.

Anyway, keep up the fun!

Lorraine Miller
Seattle, WA

I just got your latest issue of POLYHEDRON™ Newszine (#23), and I have to say that it's not the greatest, to say the least. I thought you were supposed to have articles and features on the D&D®, AD&D®, STAR FRONTIERS®, and MARVEL SUPER HEROES™, as well as other role playing games; but I look through the magazine (newszine) and what do I see? Fifty articles on the D&D Game, seventy-five articles on the AD&D Game, two articles on the GAMMA WORLD® Game, a brief mention of the STAR FRONTIERS Game, and finally NOTHING on the MARVEL SUPER HEROES Game. So far you have had a GRAND TOTAL of 2 articles on MSH. People are getting sick and tired of hearing about the D&D and AD&D Games! We want to read about some other TSR systems! I did not join the RPGA™ Network just for its pretty red card!!!!

Aaron Kazi
Jarrettsville, MD

You're almost right, Aaron. We do indeed feature articles on all TSR games — but only when members write them. The function of the Newszine is to let members talk about what interests them. I'm only the editor of this publication; it is YOU who determine the content of the Newszine by what you send me to publish. It's true that fantasy games have been stealing all the space lately — fans of the STAR FRONTIERS, TOP SECRET®, GAMMA WORLD, and MARVEL SUPER HEROES Games haven't been contributing, and I can't print what I don't have. As with everything else in life, you only get out of the organization what you put into it. If you're concerned about the absence of your favorite game, why not start the ball rolling yourself with an article? Perhaps others will be inspired to do the same.

But I shouldn't be so hard on MSH fans. The truth is that it's harder to write for that game than for any of the others, because there are legalities involved. The MARVEL SUPER HEROES Game is a licensed product; that is, TSR Inc. makes it under license from Marvel Comics Group. Marvel owns all characters, stories, etc. used in the game, and maintains complete creative control over everything published for the system. Nothing can be printed about MSH until Marvel has reviewed and approved it. While that does preserve the integrity of the milieu, it curtails what we as individuals can do with the game in print.

As a matter of fact, we had planned to run a dynamite Marvel article by the much-abused Roger Moore in the April Fool issue (the very one both of you mention). But it was not approved, and we had to make a last-minute substitution.

For those of you who would like to contribute something, your best chance is to stick with Marvel characters; "home-made" heroes and those belonging to other companies are almost always unacceptable due to their questionable legal status. In addition, POLYHEDRON™ Newszine's usual policy of allowing the author to retain rights to the material may or may not apply. (TSR Inc. can grant you permission to make limited use of its copyrighted material, but we cannot speak for Marvel.)

The good news is that Roger is currently working on another MSH feature article, which will appear next issue if all goes well.

The Press

I have just gotten through reading an article on FRP games in my local newspaper which I would like you to run in POLYHEDRON Newszine and/or DRAGON® Magazine. This is just a sample of the unmitigated, unsubstantiated trash which we must overcome to put our hobby in its proper perspective as nothing more than a game. If certain people happen to abuse the game, it is certainly not the fault of those who manufacture, produce, or promote the product, nor should it reflect on those of us who use it as it is supposed to be used — namely to have FUN in a world of non-reality for a brief period of time. But I need not reiterate this to you.

My main purpose is to bring this to the attention of other gamers and warn them to be on their guard against such contrived bunk — and even better, to actively combat it. Gamers and manufacturers alike need to promote positive publicity over all the negative press being generated about our hobby.

Jeff Renaud
Vernon, B.C.

Regretfully, we were unable to publish the article Jeff sent in, as it is the property of another publication. But Jeff's letter is just a sample of the mail we've been receiving from concerned gamers all over the country.

Members have written to tell us they are sick of all the rumors floating around that blame FRP games for everything from teen suicides to murder. Some of these intrepid folk have been standing up for their rights as gamers by publicly presenting the FACTS about the game, what it is, and what it isn't. A few have started letter campaigns to their local newspapers; others have spoken on radio or local television about the educational side benefits of role playing, such as development of skills in reading, math, writing, problem solving, concepts, and of course, group cooperation toward a common goal. We appreciate what members like Jeff have done for all of us who play, and we'd like to recognize all the others who have spoken out in their communities as well.

If you get your letters or picture in the news, send the details to Tom Robertson, RPGA Network HQ, P.O. Box 509, Lake Geneva, WI 53147! Again, thank you for your support and keep those letters coming!

Speaking of Bunk....

A few of the kids in my 7th grade class play role playing games, and recently one of them bought a decoder book for the D&D Game. They decoded several messages in one of the books suggesting that evil is the way of life and that one day inside the evil

world we will find a so-called "torch". Is this just a hoax, or a fake part of the game, or are these messages real? I would really like to know, and so would about 20 other students in my grade, plus my science teacher. If it is true, then the D&D® Game is against Christianity. Please answer my question. It is very scarey to hear these sort of things.

Miss C.J. Chuprinho
Coal Center, PA

That's a new one on me. First of all, there are no secret messages of ANY kind in TSR games. Furthermore, the AD&D® Game may be overly complex, but it's not in code; therefore it cannot be decoded. The same goes for the D&D Game system.

This kind of contrived nonsense is just what Jeff's letter is referring to, and it's time we put a stop to this kind of ignorance.

Submissions

Ms. Petticord's "Notes From HQ" struck a note in me. Fanzines are created to let players air their opinions and for game designers to take notes. Unfortunately, POLYHEDRON™ Newszine had become the opposite, resembling a miniature DRAGON® Magazine.

I'll admit I'm a fairly new member of the RPGA™ Network, but I think that DRAGON magazine should be where the game designers publish their opinions publicly. This way all gamers, not just RPGA™ members, will benefit from their insight. In fact, I think that 75-90% of all material in DRAGON Magazine should be by the game designers, with the rest for reader input.

On the other hand, POLYHEDRON Newszine should be where the players discuss various aspects of the game, and how to add more dimension to game play. In a fanzine, game designers have a direct line to what the players think, so 75-90% of all the material in the Newszine should be by the game players, with the rest for designer input.

I'm glad that Ms. Petticord agrees. I'd like to hear more from anyone else who has a comment on the content of gaming publications.

Edward Sizemore
Richmond, VA

Thanks for the support; now how about a submission? Only you can provide the reader input for that 75-90% of the Newszine.

Rank Comments

Since the Tournament Ranking System was published in Issue #22, we've received a lot of positive feedback. Most members like the new system and are already working hard to advance, but a couple of members have complaints to register, and we think they should be heard. —Penny

I feel that your Tournament Ranking System is unfair to new members. Take my own ranking, for example. I joined the RPGA™ Network at GEN CON® 17 Game Fair, which immediately placed me at Level 0. Fine. I participated in the RPGA Network's STAR FRONTIERS® tournament at that same convention and took first place. Just by playing through Round 1, I received a base 1000 XP, plus a number of XP equal to the number of players in the tournament. However, Restriction #1 of the Ranking System does not allow a player to gain more than one level in any one convention; so, regardless of my performance in the tournament, I became first level — just like those who didn't even make Round 2 of this event! I don't feel that this permits an accurate rating of an individual's role playing skill.

I don't like to raise a problem without endeavoring to put forth a solution, so I propose the following changes to the Player Ranking System:

1. Begin awarding experience points only upon advancing to the second round of any tournament. (Or, if you feel all players should be rewarded for participation, regardless of the amount of skill displayed, set the base amount for participation in the first round at 100-200 XP.)

2. Allow a player to gain all XP received in any one tournament (player's choice after all rounds have been completed and rankings posted) at a convention. In this manner, players who participate in multiple Network tournaments do not receive an advantage over the player who can only manage to schedule one RPGA tournament, and the player still receives the full fruits of his labors.

One final note regards what I guess is a typographical error. I assume that the XP modifiers for first, second, and third place finish are 10, 5, and 1, in that order, instead of the order printed.

Mike Wise
St. Joseph, MO

You're right; the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place XP modifiers were listed in reverse order.

What you say has merit, Mike, but there's more to it than meets the eye. Think about why we chose to call the units of rank "experience points". (It wasn't just to be cute.) The system measures your EXPERIENCE, that is, your activity in the hobby; just as XP in the games measure your character's adventuring activity. And even in the games you can't gain more than 1 level per adventure, regardless of earned experience. Skill adds to earned XP, but such extra points make more and more difference as you progress. It is assumed that you learn from all experience, whether or not you did everything right the first time. So far, I haven't seen that hypothesis disproved by any of our high-ranking players; there are no bad ones in the lot. Besides, it's not as though you and the other new member winners haven't gotten recognition for your spectacular talents. Winners have always been listed in print, and prizes were awarded for the skill you displayed.

Now let's look at the long-range effects of your suggestions. You propose downgrading or eliminating points awarded to 1st round players, so that rookies who advance past that will come out superior in the ratings. As it stands, any player can make 1st level just by playing one event, anywhere in the country. After that it gets tougher, but at least you've got a running start. I think a 100 XP award for participation is pretty stingy; at that rate it could take 10 tournaments just to make Level 1. And if we make it too tough to get started we'll discourage a lot of our novices (like the 98% who don't win on their first time out). That would be OUR loss; new players are the lifeblood of our hobby, bringing new ideas to us crusty old veterans.

You further propose that a player be permitted to gain whatever XP can be earned in a single event. Let's look at another example. Our "Rookie of the Year" Steve Glimpse took a 1st place in the AD&D™ tournament at that same convention. He lost at least twice as many points as you did, due to the size of the event. But instead of complaining, he went out and won a second event at another convention, and is now looking for a third in order to qualify for the AD&D Game Masters tournament at GEN CON 18 Game Fair. If he makes it, he'll be third level by this August, while you'll still be first. Does that mean he's a better player than you? Maybe not, but it does mean that he's willing to get out there and work for his advancement, which in turn supports the hobby. Think about that. If local tournaments are well-attended, they will be held again in upcoming years, ensuring that events continue to be widely available for all of us. But if no one supports them, we all stand to lose.

If you want to increase your level faster, don't just sit around waiting for next year. Play some tournaments in the meantime. If there aren't any in your area, put one together with some friends; it's not difficult anymore. Or stage a demonstration at a local shop. That's a good way to get just those few extra points you need to put you over the next level. (HQ will provide details on request.)

On the other hand, perhaps there should be some additional recognition for exceptionally skilled new players. Let's put it up for comments. How should we deal with Mike, Steve, and others like them? The letters column will be open to suggestions on that for the next few issues. Talk to us!

Secrets of Success

Tips on Playing RPGA™ Network Tournaments

by Steve Null

"At the end of [the] round...all players and DMs fill out summary sheets on which they list, in order, their votes for the four best players in their group...based on role-playing skill, rules knowledge, and cooperation, both with the other players and the judge. Specific traits of the character (leadership, stubborness, etc.), are not considered." [1]

Role playing skill, rules knowledge, and cooperation...these are the three keys that unlock the RPGA Network's trophy case. Your chance to win an RPGA Network Tournament is based solely on these three factors. So let's take a quick look at each one of them and then see how we can improve your chances.

The Keys

1. Role playing. Although this is seemingly a nebulous concept, it can be defined for the purposes of game play simply as the act of playing out a role, where this role has been loosely defined by the game designer. In RPGA Network tournaments, you are judged by your peers on how well you play this role. The sticky part is that a group of seven people (six players and the judge), will have at least seven different notions of how that role should be played. So how do you know if you are playing your role "correctly"? Simple. Watch the other players. If they are responding to your character the way that you would expect them to, given your role, then you're probably on target.

2. Rules Knowledge. This is pretty straightforward. If you want to get good marks in this area, know the rules. This doesn't mean that you should memorize the DMG or any other tome, but you should be able to answer any questions about the character class you're playing, or at least know where to look for the answers.

3. Cooperation. This is *very* important. You could be the best darn role player in the USA, but if you act like a toad during the round, arguing with the judge, interrupting other players, and spoiling everyone's fun, *who's gonna vote for you?* Even more importantly, who wants to play with someone that's obnoxious? Since having fun is one of the major reasons (if not *the* reason) to play in these tournaments, I strongly suggest that you make your best effort to cooperate with the judge and the other players. (Note that I didn't say anything about cooperating with the other *characters* — how your character behaves with respect to the other PCs depends on your role. See "The Role Stops Here", below.)

The Suggestions

1. The Mental Library. A good role player can pick up a character sheet, look at the specifications and the briefing on his relationship to the other PCs, and decide how the character should be played after only a minute or two. How can you drop into character so easily? Most such players have made it easier for themselves by developing a mental library of roles to draw from. The best sources are your own campaigns at home. You are intimately familiar with the personalities of those characters, so feel free to use any traits that seem to fit in the tournament. (I'll never tell.) Other good sources are books, movies (especially old Westerns), and for you couch potatoes, TV. (Heck, if you think your character looks like your Uncle Bill, go for it!)

2. Character Selection. It's always easy to tell which players are unsure of their role playing ability. Just watch who grabs for the character sheets first when judge sets them down. The less experienced player is often afraid of getting a "bad" character and bombing out in the round. This is not a good habit to develop, since even if you get the type you feel most comfortable with, you may be required to play a different one in each succeeding round.

A well-rounded role player should be familiar with all of the character classes and abilities, and thus be able to pick up any sheet and play that character as well any other. And with the quality of the recent modules, there are very few imbalances among the characters, so there are usually no "bad" ones. They may have their strengths in different areas, but each has enough enough meat on it to build a memorable personality.

Okay, let's talk reality. We all have favorite character types that we prefer to play. So what should you do? If you know that you're expected to play a different character each round, start with a moderately familiar type for the first round, then play one you're more proficient with in the second round, and finish with the type you know best in the final. This way, you'll be saving your best for last — where you'll need it.

3. Expand the Role. Once you pick out a character sheet and get the "feel" of the character's basic personality, you may need to "flesh it out" by inventing some background material to fill in details not covered by the character description, such as who your gunfighter shot to get that past experience (and why), or why your mutated badger smells so incredibly bad. Most of this kind of stuff is spur of the moment and really throws the judge and the other players for a loop when you feed it to them. If it applies, it's convenient to specify a mythos for your character. (What does he believe in? Who does he worship?) Attitudes, quirks, and phobias are also important. (What does your character value? How will he act in a given situation? Is he afraid of anything? Is he afraid of everything? Does he walk around with a hockey puck in his left ear?)

As you can see, the list could go on forever (or nearly so). It's up to you to make your character unique enough to be noticed by the judge and the other players. (Be careful not to overdo it, though. Just because you have thought of all this neat stuff, it doesn't mean that anybody wants to listen to a 15 minute soliloquy.)

4. Humor. Chances are that there will be least one occasion where something silly can happen to your character. Make use of it! You're there to have fun, and if you can get the other players to laugh, the fact that they had fun playing with you will stick out in their minds at voting time.

5. The Role Stops Here. I know, a bad pun, but it does apply. Be sure that the judge and the other players know where your role stops and you begin. It takes maturity to play an obnoxious character and still treat the other *players* with respect, but it can be very rewarding (and impressive to the others if you can pull it off.) I recently played in a tournament where my ranger was supposed to disagree with everything the group leader suggested. As you might have guessed, that player was fairly hacked off at me by the round's end. Luckily, I had a chance to explain my actions before we voted, and the player in question transferred his anger to a vote for me (I think).

6. Review. This is probably the most important suggestion that I can make. Before the round starts, ask your judge if he will set aside a few minutes at the end of the

round, before you vote, to discuss your characters. By doing so, you can clarify both your role and your actions. Those with characters who are supposed to be very shy, obnoxious, devious, etc. stand to gain much from a review period. If you are not given this chance, your actions may be misinterpreted.

7. First Round Strategy. Since 50% of the team advances, instead of the whole team, don't form a team with all of your friends (unless half of them are *really* good friends and don't mind losing). But be friendly with the other players on your team and make sure that you can interact with at least one of them. If there is another character that yours can play off of, your role playing skills will shine so much the brighter.

8. Time Doesn't Matter. This is truly a phrase to live by in RPGA™ Network tourments (unless you are coordinating one). Since finishing the module is not one of the tournament objectives, *don't worry about the time.* In fact, you should be so absorbed by the role playing going on around you that it wouldn't even occur to you to look at your watch.

I'm sure there are other suggestions to be made, but the eight shown above ought to start you on your way to the finals. At this point I'd like to say a few words about the other side of the coin....

...Judging

1. Pay attention. All players have a responsibility to judge the others in a fair manner. Listen attentively during play and watch the other players' actions, because at the end of the round, *you* will have to help determine which were the best role players. Don't take this duty lightly; your teammates deserve your best effort.

Base your decision solely on the three keys: role playing skill, rules knowledge, and cooperation, where role playing has the most weight. Also, when looking at a player's RP skill, remember that what counts is how well each player brought the character "to life", integrating all the characteristics — not just bringing out individual traits such as stubbornness, battle lust, and so forth.

Finally, remember that each round you play is a new round. Don't carry over impressions of how someone played a given character in the previous round — this bias is unfair to the new player who has chosen that character.

2. Judging the Judges. When you fill out the player's form, don't forget to rate your judge. This is the best opportunity you will have to let the RPGA Network know which judges are princes and which ones are toads. Best of all, with your vote, you will help to rank the judges in the new RPGA Network Tournament Ranking System as shown in POLYHEDRON™ Newszine #22. This system will help us improve the quality of our judges every year.

3. Judges take note: It's your responsibility to run the tournament in accordance with the Network's guidelines. Above and beyond that, whether or not the players have a good time is dependent upon your actions. Be prepared, be flexible, stay calm, and have fun.

The last point can't be emphasized enough. The RPGA Network tournaments were founded so that players could use their role playing skills in a competitive environment. Because it is not goal- or mission-oriented, time is not a factor. So you have a great opportunity to really ham it up with a bunch of fellow role players instead of simply herding them through a scenario.

Chances are the RPGA Network Tournament(s) you play in at the various conventions will be the highlight of your trip. Good luck and I hope to see you at GEN CON® 18 Game Fair in August!

1. POLYHEDRON Newszine, Issue 21, page 28.

Convention Announcements

Indiana:

GLATHRICON—GAMEFEST*85

And they say there's no free lunch! This year, Glathricon features RPGA™ Network Tournaments (AD&D® and TOP SECRET® Games, gaming seminars, a miniatures show, a masquerade, pool parties, and a special free lunch open to card-carrying RPGA™ members only! Don't miss the chance to collect some experience points with a sanctioned tournament!

Guests include: the creators of STAR TREK®: The Role Playing Game, Rick Reid (creator of Fluffy Quest), and as Guest of Honor, the legendary master of fantasy himself — Frank Mentzer!

For a registration brochure, contact: R.C.S.F.A., P.O. Box 3894, Evansville, IN 47737. Phone: 858-5419.

EMPEROR'S BIRTHDAY CONVENTION

Come celebrate the Emperor's Birthday on July 19-20, 1985 at the University of Notre Dame (South Bend, Indiana). This year the convention will feature an RPGA™ Network tournament (AD&D® Game) along with the usual role playing events, boardgames, and computer games. Convention hours are 9:00 am - 9:00 pm.

For information, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Robert Hagerty, 905 West Franklin Avenue, Elkhart, IN 46516.

Maryland:

Origins

Origins returns to the east coast this year, and it's better than ever! Come to Towson State College June 27-30 for the gaming experience of a lifetime! RPGA™ Network-sanctioned tournaments (AD&D® Game) will be featured (one is for members only), so sign up and earn your experience points.

For more information, send SASE to: Origins P.O. Box 139, Middletown, NJ 07748.

New York:

Council of Five Nations XI

Come to the eleventh annual gaming event in Schenectady, NY, with costume & miniatures contests, auction, RPGA™ Network Tournaments, and around-the-clock open gaming. We emphasize role playing games, but run everything from naval minis and Diplomacy to chess and backgammon. For information on attending or judging, contact: Pamela Boynton, Council, P.O. Box 4086, Queensbury, NY 12801.

Ohio:

NOWSCON 85

Once again, the Northern Ohio Wargaming Society presents Nowscon, September 28-29, 1985 at the National Guard Armory in Brookpark. The convention will feature an official RPGA™ Network-sanctioned Tournament (AD&D® Game), and the winner will be awarded the coveted Golden Pegasus trophy.

Convention Site:
Brookpark Armory
6225 Engle Road
Brookpark, OH

Hours:
Saturday: *9:00 am - midnight*
Sunday: *9:00 am - 10:00 pm.*

For information, contact: NOWS, P.O. Box 29116, Parma, OH 44129.

Tennessee

MEMPHIS FANTASY CONVENTION

(a.k.a. Son of Con II)

Come to Rodeway Inn West on August 23,24 & 25 for this benefit convention. All proceeds will be donated to St. Jude's Children's Hospital. The convention will feature an RPGA™ Network AD&D® game tournament, plus many other role playing games, boardgames, and miniatures events.

For information, contact: MFCA, 3336 Scenic Terrace, Memphis, TN 38128. Phone: (901) 454-5098. For hotel reservation, contact: Rodeway Inn West. Phone: (901) 946-3301. (Special rate! $33.00 per person per night for convention guests.)

AN AD&D® GAME FEATURE

UNOFFICIAL NEW MAGIC-USER SPELLS

© 1985 TSR, Inc.

by Jon Pickens

This is the second installment in the "New Spells" series. ("Unofficial New Spells for Clerics" appeared in Issue #22.) Some of the effects of the DMG's magic items don't directly relate to any spells currently in the system, which makes it difficult for a character to create or recharge them. These suggestions for spells may fill the bill, and a few useful "extras" are offered as well.

Adhesion (Alteration)

Level: *1*
Range: *Touch*
Duration: *1 turn/level*
Area of Effect: *Up to 2 sq. ft + 1 sq. ft./level*
Components: *V,S,M*
Casting Time: *1 round*
Saving Throw: *Special*

Explanation/Description: This dweomer causes two solid objects to adhere to one another for the duration of the spell. The caster must touch the juncture between the objects while intoning the spell. Objects joined in this manner can separated by a successful "bend bars" roll, or by a successful *dispel magic*. Unwilling creatures gain a saving throw vs. spells to avoid the effect. *Adhesion* lends itself to *permanency*. The material component is powdered horse's hoof.

Feather Float (Alteration)

Level: *1*
Range: *1"/level*
Duration: *1 round/level*
Area of Effect: *1" × 1" × 1" cube*
Components: *V,S,M*
Casting Time: *1/10 segment*
Saving Throw: *None*

Explanation/Description: This spell prevents objects or creatures within the area of effect (up to 2000 gp + 1000 gp/caster level total weight) from sinking in water or other liquids. Affected objects will bob to the surface and remain afloat for the duration of the spell, regardless of subsequent drifting. Such an object resists being pulled under with a buoyant force equal to its normal weight. The material component is a duck's feather.

Enhanced Olfaction (Alteration)

Level: *2*
Range: *0*
Duration: *5 rounds/level*
Area of Effect: *6" radius sphere*
Components: *V,S,M*
Casting Time: *2 segments*
Saving Throw: *None*

Explanation/Description: This spell enhances the caster's ability to smell odors. While the spell is in effect, the caster is surprised only 1 in 6, but a penalty of -2 applies to all saving throws vs. olfactory attacks (e.g. ghast, troglodyte, giant skunk, etc.). The material component is a small piece of dried skunk cabbage.

Mystic Writing (Alteration)

Level: *2*
Range: *Touch*
Duration: *Until triggered*
Area of Effect: *Special*
Components: *V,S,M*
Casting Time: *2 segments*
Saving Throw: *None*

Explanation/Description: Immediately upon casting this spell, the caster may inscribe a message of up to 25 words (or the equivalent) upon a solid surface, using a special pigment. Any interruption of the inscription process prevents completion of the message, but does not affect words already inscribed. The words glow the round they are written, then fade away. They will reappear as glowing letters when a *detect magic* is cast upon them and will fade out after one round. This spell lends itself to *permanency*. Each application of the pigment costs 200 gp to prepare.

Spark Shower (Evocation)
cf. Ring of Shooting Stars

Level: *2*
Range: *0*
Duration: *Instantaneous*
Area of Effect: *10' wide, 20' long cone*
Components: *V,S,M*
Casting Time: *2 segments*
Saving Throw: *None*

Explanation/Description: This spell creates a cloud of sizzling purple sparks. All creatures within the area of effect take 4-16 points of electrical damage if in contact with metal (i.e. wearing armor or holding metal weapons), or 2-8 points otherwise. The material components are a piece of flint and a piece of iron, which are struck together when casting the spell.

Stealth (Alteration)

Level: *2*
Range: *Touch*
Duration: *1 turn/level*
Area of Effect: *1 creature*
Components: *V,S,M*
Casting Time: *2 segments*
Saving Throw: *None*

Explanation/Description: This spell gives the recipient an 80% chance of moving silently, regardless of equipment carried, terrain, etc., but does not hinder normal communication or spell casting in any way. The chance for silent movement is not cumulative with natural abilities or special devices; only the highest chance applies. (Thus, the spell is useless to a thief with a 90% chance for silent movement or a character wearing *boots of elvenkind*). The material component is a small piece of soft leather.

Find Treasure (Divination)
cf. Potion of Treasure Finding

Level: *3*
Range: *6" + 1"/level*
Duration: *2 rounds/level*
Area of Effect: *1" wide path*
Components: *V,S,M*
Casting Time: *3 segments*
Saving Throw: *None*

Explanation/Description: This spell will determine the direction of the nearest large mass of treasure (at least 10,000 gp weight of coins and precious metals, or 100 gems) that is within range, but not its distance. Only valuable metals (copper, silver, electrum, gold, platinum, etc.) and gems (and/or jewelry) are located; worthless metals or magic items with no precious metals/gems are not found. The spell can be blocked by lead or by special magical wards. The material component is three hairs from a hunting hound.

Heroism (Alteration)
cf. Potion of Heroism

Level: *3*
Range: *Touch*
Duration: *2 rounds/level*
Area of Effect: *1 person*
Components: *V,S,M*
Casting Time: *3 segments*
Saving Throw: *None*

Explanation/Description: The magic-user version of this spell was developed by the elves, who guard it jealously. It affects only the fighter class and fighter subclasses, conferring a temporary increase

in life energy levels upon any such individual with fewer than 10 levels of experience (including 0 level men-at-arms). The amount of the increase is shown below:

Level of Recipient	Number of Energy Levels Bestowed	10-sided Dice for Accumulated Damage Bestowed
0	4	4
1st-3rd	3	3 + 1
4th-6th	2	2 + 2
7th-9th	1	1 + 3

The recipient fights as though at the experience level bestowed by the magic for the duration of the spell. Damage sustained is taken first from magically gained hit dice and bonus points. The material component is a leaf from an oak tree.

Lubricity (Alteration)

Level: *3*
Range: *3″*
Duration: *1 round/level*
Area of Effect: *Special*
Components: *V,S,M*
Casting Time: *3 segments*
Saving Throw: *Special*

Explanation/Description: When cast on an individual creature, this spell gives the same effect as anointment with *oil of slipperiness*. It will not hinder the recipient's ability to grasp items or move, but will confer immunity to grappling, grasping or constriction attacks, and the ability to shed ropes, bonds, etc.

If cast on a single object of 10 cubic feet volume or less, the object becomes impossible to grasp. (Objects held by creatures receive a saving throw vs. spells at the possessor's level, with success negating the effect.)

If cast on a floor or similar surface it will make a 2″ × 2″ square

area extremely slick: 95% chance per round that any creature standing in the area will slip and fall. Fallen creatures may save vs. spells to regain their footing, or may crawl/roll out of the area at the rate of 1″ per round. The material component is powdered graphite.

Mental Transport (Alteration)

Level: *3*
Range: *1″/level*
Duration: *1 round/level*
Area of Effect: *½″ diameter sphere*
Components: *V,S*
Casting Time: *3 segments*
Saving Throw: *Neg.*

Explanation/Description: This is a limited form of *telekinesis*. The caster may transport one or several small objects in a single direction at the rate of up to 2″ per round. The total weight transported may not exceed 50 + 10 gp/level of the caster, and the caster must maintain concentration or the items will fall. *Transported* objects are NOT missile weapons and move too slowly to inflict damage on creatures. The spell itself lasts until the duration expires.

One-way Lock (Alteration)

Level: *3*
Range: *1″*
Duration: *Permanent*
Area of Effect: *1 portal*
Components: *V,S*
Casting Time: *3 segments*
Saving Throw: *None*

Explanation/Description: This spell magically locks any one door, chest, or portal upon which it is cast in the same manner as a *wizard lock*, except that the closure is locked from one side only (caster's choice), and may be freely opened from the other direction. The item can be opened from the locked side only by breaking, *dispel magic*, a *knock* spell, or by a magic-user 4 or more levels higher than the caster. (Note that the last two methods do not remove the *one-way lock*, they only negate it for a brief duration.)

Sunburst (Evocation)
cf. Wand of Illumination

Level: *3*
Range: *12″*
Duration: *1/10 sec.*
Area of Effect: *4″ diameter globe*
Components: *V,S,M*
Casting Time: *3 segments*
Saving Throw: *Special*

Explanation/Description: Creates a brilliant flash of greenish-white light with blazing golden rays. Undead within the area of effect take 6-36 (6d6) points of damage (no saving throw); all other creatures within or facing the burst must save vs. spells or be blinded for 2-12 segments*. A *sunburst* negates any *darkness* spells from casters of equal or lower level. The material component is a sunflower seed.

*Does not apply to creatures without eyes, or those which are not sensitive to the visible light spectrum.

Gaseous Form (Alteration)
cf. Potion of Gaseous Form

Level: *4*
Range: *Touch*
Duration: *1 round/level*
Area of Effect: *Creature touched*
Components: *V,S*
Casting Time: *4 segments*
Saving Throw: *None*

Explanation/Description: This spell allows the recipient, plus any gear carried or worn, to assume gaseous or solid form at will for the duration of the spell; each such change of state requiring one full round to complete, with no other actions permitted. The *gaseous form* is transparent and insubstantial, and flows at a base speed of 3″ per round. (A *gust of wind* spell, or even normal strong air currents, will blow the *gaseous form* about at air speed.) A creature in *gaseous form* cannot be harmed except by magical fires or lightnings, which inflict normal damage; or a whirlwind which inflicts double damage upon any such creature. A *gaseous* individual is able to enter any space which is not airtight; i.e. a small crack or hole which allows air to penetrate also allows entry by a creature in *gaseous form*.

Ball Lightning (Evocation)
cf. Ring of Shooting Stars

Level: *5*
Range: *3″ + 1″/level*
Duration: *5 rounds/level*
Area of Effect: *Special*
Components: *V,S,M*
Casting Time: *5 segments*
Saving Throw: *½*

Explanation/Description: This spell allows the caster to create up to four balls of lightning at any time before the spell duration expires. The 3′ diameter balls resemble *dancing lights*, and can be controlled exactly as such. Each individual ball lasts a maximum of 4 rounds and can be moved at a rate of 4″. Multiple balls may be released one at a time or simultaneously. A ball will immediately discharge on contact with any target. No "to hit" roll is needed; although the target may be able to evade*. Damage inflicted per ball varies according to the number of balls created, and the target is entitled to a saving throw vs. spells for ½ damage.

Number	Damage
4	2d4 each
3	2d6 each
2	5d4 each
1	4d12

The material component is powdered blue dragon scales.

*Compare the target's movement rate to the *ball lightning's* 4″ maximum.

Protection from Petrification, 10′ radius (Abjuration)
cf. Protection from Petrification Scroll

Level: *5*
Range: *0*
Duration: *5-20 rounds*
Area of Effect: *10′ radius sphere*
Components: *V,S,M*
Casting Time: *5 segments*
Saving Throw: *None*

Explanation/Description: As with the scroll of the same name, this spell creates a 10′ radius circle of protection extending from, and moving with, the caster. All within its confines are absolutely immune to any attack forms, magical or otherwise, which cause flesh to turn to stone. The material component is powdered gorgon scales, sprinkled in a circle about the caster.

Superheroism (Alteration)
cf. Potion of Superheroism

Level: *5*
Range: *Touch*
Duration: *2 rounds/level*
Area of Effect: *1 person*
Components: *V,S,M*
Casting Time: *5 segments*
Saving Throw: *None*

Explanation/Description: The magic-user version of this spell was developed by the elves, and is guarded jealously. It affects only the fighter class and fighter subclasses, conferring a temporary increase in life energy levels upon any such individual with fewer than 13 levels of experience (including 0 level men-at-arms). The amount of the increase is as shown below:

Level of Recipient	Number of Energy Levels Bestowed	10-sided Dice for Accumulated Damage Bestowed
0	6	5
1st-3rd	5	4 + 1
4th-6th	4	3 + 2
7th-9th	3	2 + 3
10th-12th	2	1 + 4

The recipient fights as though at the experience level bestowed by the magic for the duration of the spell. Damage sustained is taken first from magically gained hit dice and bonus points. The material component is a leaf from a treant.

NEEDLE

PART I: RUINS OF EMPIRE

by Frank Mentzer

An AD&D® module for 6-8 characters of levels 8-10

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General Notes on Running "Needle"

Characters

Needle is specifically designed for the characters provided. If you do not use those characters, be sure that your PCs are equipped to handle the needs that arise, especially including those of communication, magical curing, and magical attacks. Also review the entire module and modify all the references to the PCs provided. You must also create different resolutions to some of the plot complications; for example, two of the PCs from Part I are not present in Part II, but reappear as NPCs in Part III.

Each character comes with role playing notes; this information is private, ONLY for the player of the character. Players will use some of the information in the course of the game, and some will remain secret. (You may review the role playing notes, of course.) Encourage the players to compare the characters to some extent, noting such details as height, weight, and magic items. Encourage them also to coordinate their spell selections; there are two clerics and two magic-users.

Pre-Start

Before the adventure begins, have each character make eight Saving Throws: two vs. poison, one vs. breath weapon, three vs. spells (without wisdom adjustments, if any), one vs. petrification, and one vs. death. (Two of these are not actually needed, but will help keep everyone on their toes.) Note any failures on your "Saving Throw Sheet" , then start the adventure.

Players' Background

Several years ago, when you were all novice adventurers, you joined an adventurers' guild known as SMART — the *Syndicate of Master Adventurers for the Recovery of Treasure*. You were all strangers to one another then, but you came to know and respect each other's talents over the years.

SMART is but one of several adventurers' guilds located in the capital city. By royal decree, all professional adventurers residing in the capital must belong to a guild; several organizations were formed to satisfy the letter of the King's edict. Each caters to a specialized group; there is the Assassins' Guild, the Legion of Law, and many others. SMART is one of the largest and most powerful groups now existing.

All SMART members are Neutral, at least in part. Moral extremists (such as Paladins) are not invited. Evil is also discouraged, though not totally forbidden.

SMART members swear oaths of loyalty and cooperation. Members never steal from each other, or from the group. Lost members are recovered and restored, if possible; if not, their rightful share is paid out, according to their wills.

SMART has served you well. Through it, you find opportunities for profitable adventure, friends, and knowledge. SMART members train you; SMART sells potions and normal equipment at discount prices. Your own interests are best served by keeping good relations with the group, and with its individual members.

Notices of Opportunity are always posted at SMART headquarters. You have volunteered for an adventure to serve the King. The notice was clearly marked with the rune for "High danger, high reward", and many asked to go. But you are the lucky ones, selected by the SMART leaders.

It seems that the King has heard of a large and powerful magical device located in the ruins of a city far away. He wants you to locate it for him, so that an expedition can be sent out to retrieve it. You are to be paid a relatively small fee, but can keep anything you find in the city. Your reputations will also profit, as will your guild's. Transportation is provided.

The device is rumored to be a large pillar with flat sides. No verified details of its size or powers are available.

This adventure begins in the early afternoon of a clear, sunny day. Your ship is nearing the end of its three-week voyage southward; the lookout suddenly cries "Land Ho!"

Once you debark, the ship and crew will wait for up to two weeks before they give up and return home.

PART 1: THE TRAIL
Notes for the DM

Natives

There are two native tribes living in this area, and in conflict with each other. The villages of both tribes will be deserted if visited during this adventure.

Grippli

The "good" natives are humanoid tree frogs called Grippli. Each is about 2½ feet tall; they eat fruit and insects (including giant forms, caught with nets and snares). Their hands and feet are adapted for easy movement through tree branches (9″ rate). They wear no armor. They have 700 year lifespans but few offspring.

Grippli have grey-green skin, natural camouflage which aids in surprise (1-4 on 1d6). They have ultravision (10″ range), allowing nighttime activity. However, they are not warlike. They speak their own tongue and a "Batrachian-Common" language by which they talk (though rarely) with froglike humanoids of other races. (See Encounter T2 for Grippli stats.)

The Grippli can be easily scared away by loud noises or magical displays. If scared off, they run to their village to tell the tribal mother about the events. They are not a real threat in this adventure; rather, they are an opportunity. One or two Grippli may be slain, either by mistake or if they are provoked to attack; however, if 5 or more Grippli are slain, for *any* reason, the entire village will flee deep into the jungle and not return.

The Grippli village is not visible from the air, as it is completely hidden under heavy jungle cover. It consists of 30 mud-and-grass huts around a central ceremonial area (rarely used, but containing blackened logs and ashes).

If approached carefully, the Grippli may be dealt with peacefully. They are interested both in well-crafted items (nearly everything the party has) and in brightly colored items, but not in treasure. They may offer to trade gems in exchange for other items; however, they have no conception of "real" gem values. Each Grippli carries some gems, as given in the descriptions. If bartering occurs, roll 1d20 to determine the value of the gem offered:

Die Roll	Value
1-4	10 gp
5-8	50 gp
9-12	100 gp
13-16	500 gp
17-19	1000 gp
20	5000 gp

Bullywugs

The "bad" natives are humanoid frog-like beings (physically very similar to the Grippli) called Bullywugs. They are about the same size (some larger), similarly colored, and eat the same things — fruit and insects — plus flesh. They also wear no armor, but may use shields on occasion. They have also adapted for easy movement in trees. They speak their own tongue and the "Batrachian Common" tongue, as do the Grippli.

Bullywugs are less intelligent than Grippli, but more aggressive. They surprise on 1-3 (on 1d6), or 1-5 if hopping to the attack. Like the Grippli, the Bullywugs can easily be scared away by loud noises or magical displays. If scared off, they run to their village to tell their leader about the events.

They are a minor factor in this adventure, but will have more influence in Part II of this series of modules.

The Bullywug village is not visible from the air, completely hidden under heavy jungle cover. Very similar to the Grippli lair, it consists of 25 mud huts around a central ceremonial area (rarely used, but containing a muddy bog with some bones). If 20 or more Bullywugs are slain, the entire village will flee deep into the jungle and not return.

The Bullywugs are not interested in trade of any kind. They may pretend to be Grippli if approached, but will probably attack if an ambush is possible, or if surprise is likely. Survivors will flee such an attack quickly, leaving if any 2 are slain; however, such encounters will arouse their innate hostility, and more Bullywug attacks will surely follow.

Bullywug Native: AL CE; MV 3"//15"; HD 1; AC 6; THAC0 19; AT 3 or 1; Dmg 1-2/1-2/2-5 or by weapon; SZ S; IN Average; STs 17, STw 16.

Treetops

There are many creatures dwelling in the trees, and they can be quite dangerous: giant dragonflies, various normal and giant snakes (boa constrictors, boalisks, poison and spitting snakes, and others); spiders of all types and sizes; and giant wasps, living in several huge colonies in the treetops. They normally stay there, but sometimes venture near the ground to forage for prey. They rarely fly above the treetops.

If characters go near the treetops, either by flying or climbing, tell the players that the trees are "thick with flying, crawling, hissing creatures of all types". Try to impress them with the *extreme danger* of entering or passing through the treetops.

Characters who do enter the treetops are attacked by the collection of creatures below:

If these are all killed, the characters can proceed without further problems, unless they re-enter the treetops at another point. Consider this horde to be present in any one section of treetops, roughly 100' square; if treetops are entered in a different place, another group will be ready, waiting, and hungry.

Dragonfly, giant: 3; AL N; MV 1"/36"; HD 8 + 3; hp 40 ea.;AC 3; THAC0 12; AT 1; Dmg 4-16; SZ M; IN Low; STs 6, STw 5.
Special Defenses: + 2 bonus to initiative; with initiative — immune to hand-held weapons, AC -1 vs. missiles; without initiative — AC 1 vs. missiles; makes all saving throws as L16 M-U.

Snake, giant constrictor: 1; AL N; MV 9"; HD 6 + 1; hp 30; AC 5; THAC0 13; AT 2; Dmg 1-4/2-8; SZ L; IN Animal; STs 16, STw 15.

Snake, giant poisonous: 2; AL N; MV 15"; HD 4 + 2; hp 12 ea.; AC 5; THAC0 15; AT 1; Dmg 1-3 + poison; SZ L; IN Animal; STs 17, STw 16.
Special Attacks: Poisonous bite.

Spider, huge: 6; AL N; MV 18"; HD 2 + 2; hp 12 ea.; AC 6; THAC0 16; AT 1; Dmg 1-6 + poison; SZ M; IN Animal; STs 17, STw 16.
Special Attacks: Surprise on 1-5; leap 3" range; weak poison (+ 1 bonus to saving throws).

Spider, giant: 4; AL CE; MV 3"*12"; HD 4 + 4; hp 25 ea.; AC 4; THAC0 15; AT 1; Dmg 2-8 + poison; SZ L; IN Low; STs 16, STw 15.
Special Attacks: Poisonous bite.

Wasp, giant: 10; AL N; MV 6"/21"; HD 4; hp 25 ea.; AC 4; THAC0 15; AT 2; Dmg 2-8/1-4 + poison; SZ M; IN Non; STs 17, STw 16.
Special attacks: Tail sting (save vs. poison or suffer permanent paralysis).
Note: Wings burn off in fire (no damage, but wasp cannot fly thereafter).

Encounter Key

The Beach

The ship lands on a strip of clear shoreline, but dense jungle lies beyond. The characters may either search for a trail (there is one), or fly overhead looking for clues. An aerial search will reveal nothing but jungle for miles unless *detect invisibility* is used; if so, some ruins can be spotted 1½ miles inland under the dense treetops, straight in from the beach. Swarming hordes of creepy crawlies (see "Treetops" section) can be seen in the trees as well. The trail also leads to the ruins.

Refer to the Overview map. If the party heads in by the trail, note the encounters along the way. If they all take the aerial route, landing in or near the ruins, use the "Treetop" encounter as noted earlier.

The trail leads northwest from the beach for about 70 yards, then heads north for 300 yards, and turns again to the northwest.

T1. Weirdness

At the point marked "X" on the Overview map, 200 yards west of the first bend in the trail, stands a basidirond. It has been emitting poisonous hallucinatory spores, which cover the area marked with the dotted circle.

Use the results of Saving Throw A (vs. poison). Anyone who has failed this saving throw is affected in some way, believing that something is wrong. *Do not announce the effects;* simply give ONE note (handouts, center section) to EACH player. Players with affected characters should receive "delusion" notes; those with unaffected characters should be given the "message" notes provided.

The hallucinations are NOT illusions, and disbelief has no effect; they MUST be believed and acted upon as if real. Tell the players to read their messages, and not to compare or discuss them, merely to act on them.

The delusions will continue until 1-4 rounds after leaving the area, or until a *slow poison* or a *neutralize poison* is applied. (However, if the latter method is used, another saving throw must be made immediately.) *Keoghtom's ointment* will give immunity to the effects for 3 turns.

The noise awakens a jungle anhkheg, which rises up at the west side of the path (but without surprise), and attacks. Deluded characters MIGHT be able to attack the anhkheg, if convenient or wise, but their delusions have first priority. The delusions do not prohibit spellcasting.

Ignore acid damage to items. When the monster is damaged to 15 hp or less, it squirts acid in the next round, automatically gaining initiative. Use the victims' Saving Throw C (vs. breath weapon). The monster can attack normally after squirting (at the end of the same round), but no extra acid damage applies to a bite after the creature has used its squirt.

If the party flees, the ankheg will move onto the trail and pursue.

Basidirond: AL N(E); MV 6"; HD 5 + 5; hp 35; AC 4; THAC0 13; AT 1; Dmg 2d4 + smother; SZ M (6'); IN ?; STs 14, STw 13.
Special Attacks: Spores clog victim's respiratory tract on a successful hit unless a save vs. poison is made. Victim will smother in 2-5 rounds unless a *cure disease* is applied.
Special Defenses: immune to all *charm, hold*, and mind attacks; cold slows by ½ and prevents spore attacks.

Anhkheg: AL N; MV 12" (6"); HD 8; hp 50; AC 2/4; THAC0 13; AT 1; Dmg 3d6 + 1d4 acid; SZ L (20' long); IN Non; STs 16, STw 15.
Special Attacks: Squirt acid (30' stream, 10' wide at base) for 8d4 points of damage. (Save vs. breath weapon for ½ damage.)

T2. Visitors

From the first bend, the trail proceeds northwest for 635 yards (9 diagonals of map squares), and then turns north. But 70 yards (one diagonal) before the turn, the party notices a small group of frog-like humanoids in the jungle to their right (northeast), watching them carefully.

These are the Grippli; be sure you are familiar with them. (See "Natives" above for details.) They will flee from any party aggressiveness, but will not fear spell casting in itself. They do *NOT* speak (human) common, only the Grippli and "Batrachian Common" tongues; thus, a *tongues* spell is needed for meaningful communication. Alignment language may be used, but will only produce general messages — such as "Peace!" and "Got anything for me?" If approached peacefully, they may barter, and may possibly be convinced to take the party to take the party to their village. (Note that they will not suggest this, but may agree if sufficiently bribed or *charmed.*)

If any good will is generated, through trading or conversation, and if communication is possible, the Grippli will reveal the following bits of information:

1. There are others about, like Grippli but not like Grippli, who are nasty, and enemies of the Grippli. However, they have not been seen for a week or two.
2. There is a plant monster ahead, at the second bend in the trail, which is best avoided. Only a slight departure from the trail is needed; the party should stop 100 feet south of the turn, head northwest through jungle for 200 feet, and then turn north again; they will easily regain the trail.

Notes: The Grippli "foot" is ⅗ the size of the human foot. Thus, the creatures' directions are not correct if used in human terms. A Detail Map is provided, giving the paths taken by the party if the true Grippli distances are used (Path A), and if human "feet" are used (Path B). If anyone thinks to double-check Grippli

distances — by comparing actual feet, or asking for the Grippli estimate of an item's or person's size (multiply normal size by 5/3), this discrepancy can easily be noted and corrected.

Path B comes within range of another Mantrap, located 60 yards (human) west of the one by the trail. If this occurs, use the same details as given for the first one. If BOTH are encountered, (unlikely but possible), have all characters make saving throws for the second one; do not use pre-rolled saves.

Many characters (and all magic-users) can accurately estimate lengths at a distance, if a clear view can be obtained (and such is the case on straight sections of trail). This elementary surveying technique requires only the use of an item with a known length (such as a 10′ pole). Thus, the distance from the turn CAN be estimated without approaching the danger zone.

Grippli Natives: 4; AL N; MV 15″; HD 1 + 1; hp 6 ea.; AC 9; THAC0 18; AT 1; Dmg 1d4 or weapon; SZ S; IN Very to Exceptional; STs 17, STw 16.

T3. Sniff

After the trail turns north, it proceeds for 200 yards and then again turns northwest. Near that turn, 40 feet to the north, is an insidious plant monster called a Mantrap (Detail Map #T-3). It appears similar to a huge (24′ tall) weed, with bell-like flowers on its stem, and with five large trap-like leaves. It does not attack with the leaves; it merely waits until prey climbs in voluntarily!

Use the results of Saving Throw B (vs. poison). All victims become fascinated by the odor, and leave the trail heading north. Those attracted will go to the body of the plant and voluntarily climb into one of the 4 leaves on the plant, unless prevented by their comrades. Once entered, a leaf closes about the victim, inflicting a number of points per round equal to the victim's AC rear (minimum of 1 point per round), by acid damage. Items exposed to the acid must be saved for immediately, and at the beginning of each turn (not round) thereafter; all metal receives a + 2 bonus.

The victims can only be pulled free if the plant is killed or if the attacking leaf (and branch) is cut off; treat each leaf-stalk as AC 6, hp 10. (Note that an edged weapon is needed for the latter. Damage to a leaf-stalk is NOT counted against the monster's total hit points.)

The fascination comes from a pollen released from the plant, to 20 yard range. This is a poisonous effect, not a magical one; it can be dispelled by the passage of time (24 hours spent out of range), or the burning of the plant, or magical remedies against poison (*slow poison* or *neutralize poison, Keoghtom's Ointment*, etc.). Note, however, that if the inhaled pollen is *neutralized* while the victim is still within pollen range, the victim must make another saving throw (vs. the poison/fascination) immediately! (Do not use pre-rolled Saving Throws if this occurs.)

Mantrap: AL N; MV 0; HD 8; hp 55; AC 6; AT 1 (x4); Dmg = victim's AC rear; SZ L; IN Non; STs 16, STw 15.
Special Defenses: Immune to all mind attacks (no mind), and to other spells as a normal plant.

T4. Watcher

From the "Mantrap bend", the trail proceeds northwest for 212 yards (3 map diagonals) and turns north again. However, 25 yards before that turn, the trail crosses an unusual flat, hard, cleared area that is 12 yards wide. This is the remains of an old road, which once led from the city (now ruins) to the coast. No large trees grow on the old road; only shrubs and small plant growth can survive on it. It is not visible from above, as the branches of nearby trees intertwine far above it, forming a canopy.

Buzzing over the road to the north of the trail at this point are 3 giant dragonflies, which will attack as soon as the party arrives. Standing motionless at the edge of the road just south of this point is a giant mantis. It will not be noticed, blending perfectly with the underbrush, unless *detect invisibility* or some other means is used. The mantis will NOT attack at this time; if spotted and attacked, it will flee.

The mantis is watching for easy prey. During the melee, if one or two characters (only; not 3 or more) back up to the south edge of the path (to avoid the dragonflies), the mantis will reach out quietly and carefully and grab one victim from behind with its forelimbs (2d6 points of damage); the victim is not silenced, but is immobile (use AC rear hereafter). During the next and following rounds, the mantis will bite at the victim each round, while turning about and heading south down the old roadway (6″ rate). It cannot fly in this terrain. If pursued and attacked, it will flee from missile or magical attacks (still holding its victim), but will stop and fight if attacked hand-to-hand.

Note: The mantis will NEVER attack if 3 or more characters back off from the dragonfly melee (or if none back off); it will choose to remain hidden, to await other prey.

Dragonflies: 3; AL N; MV 1″/36″; HD 8 + 3; hp 50 each; AC 3; THAC0 12; AT 1; Dmg 3d4; SZ M; IN Low; STs 6, STw 5.
Special Defenses: Saves as Level 16 M-U. The monsters gain a + 2 bonus to all initiative rolls. (In play, add the bonus to your roll, and have one player roll for the party. Individuals MAY add their Dexterity modifiers (if applicable) and compare their totals against the dragonfly opponents.) Due to their high-speed darting and hovering, the following combat effects apply:

Monster WINS initiative:	Immune to hand-held weapons,
Monster LOSES (or TIES)	and AC -1 vs. missile fire.
initiative:	AC 1 vs. missile fire.

Giant Mantis: AL N; MV 6″/12″; HD 10; hp 70; AC 3; THAC0 10; AT 1 grab or bite; Dmg 2d6 or 3d4; SZ L (12′ tall); STs 14, STw 13.

T5. Continue

From this point, the party can continue up the path, or may take the old road. Either way, no encounters will occur; however, one noteworthy bit of information is obtained at the point where the road and path intersect next.

An old trap lies at that point, now obvious and easily avoided. It consists of 4 spears, their points discolored by poison (now harmless), mounted on a spear-throwing contraption made of branches. Some footprints are nearby — those of froglike humanoids. (Actually bullywugs, but the characters may think otherwise.)

Both the trail and the road lead to the ruins.

PART 2: THE RUINS
DM Notes on the Maze
Corridors and Rooms

The entire maze is very clean, except for a bit of rubble around each entranceway. The floors and walls are stone; the ceiling, 15′ up, is the force field. The stone is very tough and slightly enchanted besides; digging will not penetrate it, spikes cannot be hammered into it, and so forth. However, a *passwall* spell can cause part of a wall to disappear for the spell duration, producing a hole 5′ tall, 8′ wide, and 10′ deep.

Doors

Each door is made of a shiny reddish metal unknown to the characters (silicon-steel). No hinges, locks, latches or doorknobs can be found. All doors open by themselves when touched; no "open doors" roll is needed. When any door is touched, it slides downwards into the floor until its top is flush with the stone, leaving a flat surface. The door remains in that position until closed (via the control room in the center of the maze) or until it closes itself (as given in some descriptions). Unless a description mentions that a door closes, assume that once opened, it remains open. *Whenever a door remains open, put an "O" beside it on your map. (This may be needed later.)*

Zap

The maze appears to be an easy one, but there is actually only one route through it. Your DM's map is marked with several blockages, each marked with a "*"; this stands for "disintegrator". Disintegrators are invisible and non-magical, but will register as traps if a clerical *find traps* spell is used.

The "*" may occur at a door or doorway, or may simply block a corridor. When a "*" door is opened, the doorway is filled with a bluish electricity; this has the same effect as a "*" area in a passage.

The passage of one foot or more of material through a "*" will activate the disintegrator, destroying that portion of the material which has passed through. Thus, a 15 inch stick inserted in a "*" area will suddenly go "zap", and the character will be holding a 3-inch stick, cleanly cut off. (Note that a small object thrown through

Montana

You are a "tomboy", even among female dwarven fighters, and enjoy a rousing good time of any sort. Among your kind, you're awesome — standing well above the average height, and very sturdily built. You stay in shape by having fun — activity of any sort. Though you may seem a bit "rough-and-tumble" to others, you don't care; if they don't like it, they can go away. Fast. You enjoy challenging male dwarves, proving that you're the best, whatever the contest; and you prove your worth, rather than merely brag.

Besides your strong racial preferences, you like fun and games — boisterous activity of any sort. You dislike weaklings and "fat boys", though you have come to respect the cleric's skills (if not his other traits). As a very active person, you enjoy almost anything strenuous — a good fight, mountain climbing, mining, and so forth. Your magical *boots* help in these pursuits, as well as in many melee and dungeon situations. As part of a standard group marriage in your Boulder Clan, you are involved in the running of the clanhome whenever you're there. You take a dominant role, of course. Most of the gals think you're wonderful, and some would like to nominate you for clanmistress; but you don't want to be tied down with that sort of thing.

BLONDY, the leading fighter, is a well-built but quiet lady, always polite and patient. She's not too bright, but that doesn't interfere with her reknowned fighting skill. You get along well with her, often telling each other stories.

SLIM, the human magic-user, is usually very serious. He seems taller than his 6 foot height, since he's very thin. He's been exercising to build up his strength (but without success), and stays healthy by carefully watching his diet. He's too serious, though; sometimes you get in the way of his spells (by accident, *levitating*), and he gets mad.

SMILEY, the cleric, is sensitive about his weight — well over 200 pounds, but only 5′ 4″ tall. He's outgrown 2 sets of plate armor already, and is stuck with chain mail. He's got a good sense of humor, and a full appreciation for dwarven things —especially fine ale.

THE GHOST, the halfling thief with his *ring of invisibility*, is very independent; he's always sneaking off somewhere. You don't know much about him, but he's never caused any problems.

DIGGER, the gnome fighter-thief, is also called "hoser", due to his magic water bottle. His sense of black humor (as with all gnomes) is sometimes irritating. You get along nicely, however. You'll freely admit he knows more about mining than you do; but he's also a skinny little runt.

BLAZE, the little red-haired elf fighter-magic-user, is a real powerhouse. She specializes in "attack-type" magic, and collects magic wands. You avoid each other, sometimes exchanging snide remarks — if it doesn't interfere with battling common enemies.

FINDER, the half-elf cleric-ranger, is a little clumsy and sometimes disagreeable. However, his skills are many; his magic helmet and arrow, combined with his ranger skills, enable him to find or read almost anything. Other than those material assets, though, he's a bore, and sometimes a real pain, with his "goody goody" attitude.

Smiley

You are a fat, jolly churchman, dedicated to bringing peace and happiness to the world (starting with your allies). You have a weight problem, and have grown too wide for any available plate mail. You're looking for better chain mail, but aren't seriously trying to trim down; it's too much trouble. Usually good-humored and optimistic, you try to find the best in everyone and everything. Most of your comrades aren't as forgiving as you are, and you're trying to show them a more Good-oriented outlook, through word and deed.

You like demi-humans a lot, and are studying their psychology; they're a fascinating lot. You dislike Evil to the extreme, often praying over your enemies before you slay them. You are a conniseur of excellent food and drink; you can often identify a wine's year and place of manufacture, and are a leading authority on elven wines and dwarven ales of the last 500 years. Your wife (another large, jolly person) is an excellent cook. By comparison, she makes you feel thin — wonderful! Together you run a small, exquisite, expensive restaurant in the capital.

You know all the others here quite well; you have adventured with them before:

BLONDY, the leading fighter, is a well-built but quiet lady, always polite and patient. She's not too bright, but that doesn't interfere with her reknowned fighting skill. When she kids you about your weight, you pretend to get mad (but you don't, actually).

SLIM, the human magic-user, is usually very serious. He seems taller than his 6 foot height, since he's very thin. He's been exercising to build up his strength (but without success), and stays healthy by carefully watching his diet. You often avoid standing near him; that seems to generate unfavorable comments and comparisons from others.

MONTANA, the dwarf, is a grumpy but trusted fighter. She likes to *levitate* during combat, using her magic boots. Sometimes she's a little bloodthirsty, you think, but she's been a valuable source of information about dwarven lifestyles — and ale!

THE GHOST, the halfling thief with his *ring of invisibility*, is very independent; he's always sneaking off somewhere. You believe that your praying and lectures helped turn him from evil ways, a few years ago, when he was more reckless.

DIGGER, the gnome fighter-thief, is also called "hoser", due to his magic water bottle. His sense of black humor (as with all gnomes) is sometimes irritating, but you have learned to appreciate it, and can now fluently engage in witty gnomish repartee — to his delight.

BLAZE, the little red-haired elf fighter-magic-user, is a real powerhouse. She specializes in "attack-type" magic, and collects magic wands. She's a mysterious sort; your other elven contacts reveal more information than she does. You tend to watch for her actions, as good clues in fast-response situations; she depends on you for protection from Undead.

FINDER, the half-elf cleric-ranger, is a little clumsy and sometimes disagreeable. However, his skills are many; his magic helmet and arrow, combined with his ranger skills, enable him to find or read almost anything. He's nearly hopeless as a cleric; you often help him select and coordinate spells.

Slim

You are a serious student of your craft. Due to your thin build and low strength, you exercise and watch your diet closely. You have opinions about nearly everything, and sometimes talk too much, assuming a lead role. Your sharp, perceptive comments are sometimes lost on the others.

You like philosophical discussions, and dislike people who can't keep up with your mental speed. You like reading, and write exciting stories in your spare time. Sometimes you get so interested in studies that you forget to exercise — sometimes for days. A long-time bachelor, you have a suite of rooms in a castle back home. The castle belongs to your tutor of the last 12 years, the noted court Wizard Felonius.

You know all the others here quite well; you have adventured with them before:

BLONDY, the leading fighter, is a well-built but quiet lady, always polite and patient. She's not too bright, but that doesn't interfere with her reknowned fighting skill. You've given her some help with her diet, but often become impatient with her lack of quick understanding.

SMILEY, the cleric, is sensitive about his weight — well over 200 pounds, but only 5′ 4″ tall. He's outgrown 2 sets of plate armor already, and is stuck with chain mail. He's otherwise a very likeable person, but you avoid standing near him; others sometimes make unflattering comments about the two of you.

MONTANA, the dwarf, is a grumpy but trusted fighter. She likes to *levitate* during combat, using her magic boots. She's very trustworthy, but sometimes gets in the way of your spells.

THE GHOST, the halfling thief with his *ring of invisibility*, is very independent; he's always sneaking off somewhere. You still don't trust him completely, and prefer to keep a *detect invisibility* running to keep an eye on him. He used to be crooked, but has behaved himself for a year or two...

DIGGER, the gnome fighter-thief, is also called "hoser", due to his magic water bottle. His sense of black humor (as with all gnomes) is sometimes irritating. You and he get along quite well; he often carries your spellbook in his *bag of holding*.

BLAZE, the little red-haired elf fighter-magic-user, is a real powerhouse. She specializes in Evocations, and collects magic wands. By coordinating her spells with your Alterations, you can handle almost anything. She seems almost childlike sometimes, and you have to keep reminding yourself that she's nearly as talented as you are...

FINDER, the half-elf cleric-ranger, is a little clumsy and sometimes disagreeable. However, his skills are many; his magic helmet and arrow, combined with his ranger skills, enable him to find or read almost anything. You two get along passably well, but sometimes he's almost sickeningly "good" — definitely an extremist.

Slim

9th Level Human Magic-User

Ability Scores

STR: *7 -1 to hit, -150 cn wt, Doors 1, BB-LG 0%*
INT: 18 *+ 7 languages, CtK 85%, 9-18/ level*
WIS: 12
DEX: 15 *-1 AC bonus*
CON: 15 *+ 1 hp/die, SS 91, RES 94*
CHA: 8

Description

Age: 38 (mature)
Sex: Male
Height: 6′ (average)
Weight: 158 pounds (17 below average)
Alignment: Neutral

Combat Data

THACO: 19
AC normal: 3
AC rear: 4
Armor Type: *bracers of defense* (AC4)
Hit Points: 35

Weapon Proficiencies: 2; dagger, staff.
NPP: -5.

Saving Throws	
Poison, paralysis, death	13
Petrification, polymorph	11
Rod, staff, or wand	9
Breath weapon	13
Spell	10

Racial & Professional Skills

Spells: 4, 3, 3, 2, 1

Equipment

Magic items: *bracers of defense* (AC 4), *dagger + 3, dagger + 1, portable hole, wand of negation* (23 chg), *staff of striking* (12 chg); *potions of extra-healing, flying, invisibility.*

Normal Items:

Spell Books

Level 1 Spells *(Memorize 4)*

Dancing Lights	*Magic Missile*
Enlarge	*Protection from Evil*
Erase	*Read Magic*
Feather Fall	*Shocking Grasp*

Level 2 Spells *(Memorize 3)*

Detect Invisibility	*Knock*
Invisibility	*Magic Mouth*

Level 3 Spells *(Memorize 3)*

Dispel Magic	*Lightning Bolt*
Fly	*Slow*

Level 4 Spells *(Memorize 2)*

Charm Monster	*Polymorph Self*
Dimension Door	

Level 5 Spells *(Memorize 1)*

Extension II	*Passwall*

XP: 240,000
Gold:

Smiley

9th Level Human Cleric

Ability Scores

STR: 9 *Doors 1-2, BB-LG 1%*
INT: 9 *+ 1 language*
WIS: 18
DEX: 11
CON: 15 *+ 1 hp/die, SS 91, RES 94*
CHA: 13 *+ 5% reactions*

Description

Age: 31 (mature)
Sex: Male
Height: 5′8″ (8″ below average)
Weight: 220 pounds (45 pounds above average)
Alignment: Neutral Good

Combat Data

THACO (unmodified): 16
AC normal: 2
AC rear: 4
Armor Type: chain & shield
Hit Points: 50

Weapon Proficiencies: 4; club, hammer, mace.
NPP: -3.

Saving Throws*	
Poison, paralysis, death	7
Petrification, polymorph	10
Rod, staff, wand	11
Breath weapon	13
Spell	12

** Add + 4 Wisdom bonus where applicable*

Racial & Professional Skills

Spells: 6, 6, 4, 3, 1

Turning Undead		
Skeleton, Zombie	D	7-12
Ghoul, Shadow, Wight	D	1-12
Ghast, Wraith	T	1-12
Mummy	4	
Spectre	7	
Vampire	10	
Ghost	13	
Lich	16	
Special	19	

Equipment

Magic Items: *chain mail + 1, shield + 1, hammer + 2, mace + 1; ring of free action, wand of magic detection* (21 chg); *potions of diminution, flying, healing.*

Normal Items:
XP: 240,000
Gold:

Montana

8th Level Dwarf Fighter

Ability Scores

STR: 17 *+ 1 to hit/ + 1 damage, + 500 cn wt, Doors 1-3, BB-LG 13%*
INT: 9
WIS: 10
DEX: 15 *-1 AC bonus*
CON: 17 *+ 3 hp/die, SS 97, RES 98*
CHA: 7 *-5% reactions*

Description

Age: 67 (mature)
Sex: Female
Height: 4′2″ (4″ above average)
Weight: 126 pounds (6 pounds above average)
Alignment: Neutral

Combat Data

THACO (unmodified)*: 14
AC normal: -1
AC rear: 2
Armor Type: plate & shield
Hit Points: 75

Weapon Proficiencies: 6; battle axe, hammer, crossbow, spear, bastard sword, 2-handed sword.
NPP: -2.

** + 1 bonus to hit vs. goblin, hobgoblin, orc, half-orc -4 AC bonus vs. ogre, troll, ogre mage, giant, titan.* **Note:** Cannot use longbow nor anything over 12′ long.

Saving Throws*	
Poison, paralysis, death	10
Petrification, polymorph	11
Rod, staff, wand	12
Breath weapon	12
Spell	13

** Race bonus NOT included: Add + 4 vs. spell, rod, staff, or wand.*

Racial & Professional Skills

Attacks: 3/2 rounds
Languages: Common, dwarven, gnome, goblin, kobold, orcish.
Special Abilities: Infravision 60′ Find slopes 9/12, new construction 9/12, shifting wall 8/12, stone traps 6/12, depth underground 6/12.

Equipment

Magic items: *plate mail + 1, shield + 1, battle axe + 2, hammer + 1, bastard sword + 1/ + 4 vs. reptiles; boots of levitation; potions of extra-healing, growth, speed.*

Normal Items:
XP: 200,000
Gold:

Blaze

High Elf Fighter/Magic-User (5/8)

Ability Scores

STR: 15 *+200 cn wt, Doors 1-2, BB-LG 7%*
INT: 17 *CtK 75%, 8-14 spells/level*
WIS: 9
DEX: 15 *-1 AC bonus*
CON: 10 *SS 70, RES 75*
CHA: 9

Description

Age: 204 (mature)
Sex: Female
Height: 4′2″ (4″ below average)
Weight: 74 pounds (6 pounds below average)
Alignment: Neutral

Combat Data

THACO (unmodified-fighter)*: 16
AC normal: 0
AC rear: 3
Armor Type: chain & shield
Hit Points: 35

**-2 Non-Proficiency Penalty when using magic-user weapons is actually better than using magic-user "to hit" chances)*

Weapon Proficiencies (Fighter)*: 5; shortbow, lance, spear, bastard sword, longsword.
Weapon Proficiencies (Magic-User)*: 2; dagger, staff.
NPP: -2 (Fighter); -5 (Magic-User).
**Cannot use longbow, crossbow, nor anything over 12′ long or over 200 cn weight.*

Saving Throws	
Poison, paralysis, death	11
Petrification, polymorph	11
Rod, staff, wand	9
Breath weapon	13
Spell	10

Racial & Professional Skills

Languages: Common, elvish, gnoll, gnome, goblin, halfling, hobgoblin, orcish, treant, and giant common.
Special Abilities: 90% resistant to sleep, charm; +1 bonus to hit with bow or sword.
Spells: 4, 3, 3, 2

Equipment

Magic Items: *chain mail +2, shield +1, shortbow +1, spear +2, bastard sword +1 flametongue (+2 vs. regenerating, +3 vs. cold-using and avian, +4 vs. undead); wand of illumination* (24 chg), *wand of paralyzation* (9 chg), *brooch of shielding* (absorbs 53 pts); *potions of healing, speed, super-heroism.*

Normal Items:

Spell Books

Level 1 Spells *(Memorize 4)*

Dancing Lights — *Magic Missile*
Enlarge — *Protection from Evil*
Erase — *Read Magic*
Feather Fall — *Shocking Grasp*

Level 2 Spells *(Memorize 3)*

Detect Invisilbility — *Knock*
Invisibility — *Magic Mouth*

Level 3 Spells *(Memorize 3)*

Dispel Magic — *Lightning Bolt*
Fly — *Slow*

Level 4 spells *(Memorize 2)*

Charm Monster — *Polymorph Self*
Dimension Door

Level 5 spells *(Memorize 1)*

Extension II — *Passwall*

XP: 100,000/100,000
Gold:

MESSAGE

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Finder

Half-Elf Cleric/Ranger (5/7)

Ability Scores

STR: 18/23 *+1 to hit/+3 damage, +1000 cn wt, Doors 1-3, BB-LG 20%*
INT: 13
WIS: 14
DEX: 8
CON: 15 *+1 hp/die, SS 91, RES 94*
CHA: 7 *-5% reactions*

Description

Age: 71 (mature)
Sex: Male
Height: 5′3″ (3″ below average)
Weight: 145 pounds (15 pounds above average)
Alignment: Neutral Good

Combat Data

THACO (unmodified ranger)*: 14
AC normal: 4
AC rear: 4
Armor Type: *bracers of defense* (AC 4)
Hit Points: 45

**Note: -2 Non-proficiency penalty as Ranger actually gives better chances than using Cleric "to hit" chances.*

Weapon Proficiencies (Ranger): 5; longbow, lance, spear, longsword, 2-handed sword.
Weapon Proficiencies (Cleric): 3; hammer, flail, mace.
NPP: 2 (ranger); -3 (cleric)

Saving Throws*	
Poison, paralysis, death	9
Petrification, polymorph	11
Rod, staff, wand	12
Breath weapon	12
Spell	13

** 30% resistant to* sleep *and* charm

Racial & Professional Skills

Languages: Common, elvish, gnoll, gnome, goblin,

Special Abilities: Infravision 60′ Detect Secret doors 1/6 passing, 2/6 searching; Concealed doors 1/6 passing, 3/6 searching.

Spells: 5, 3, 1 (includes Wisdom bonus)

Turning Undead		
Skeleton, Zombie, Ghoul	D	1-12
Shadow, Wight	T	1-12
Ghast	4	
Wraith	7	
Mummy	10	
Spectre	13	
Vampire	16	
Ghost	20	

Equipment

Magic Items: *bracers of defense* (AC 4), *flail +2, longsword +3 defender, 2-handed sword +1; helm of comprehending languages and reading magic, arrow of direction; potions of animal control* (all), *extra-healing, levitation, sweet water.*

Normal Items:

XP: 100,000/100,000
Gold:

Delusions

Your character has stepped into a swampy bog, and is stuck. Take off all armor, and get help before you sink!

Suddenly, huge spiders come running at the party from all sides! Attack them!

Your character suddenly realizes that the item held in one hand is a deadly pit viper! Drop it, move away, and attack it!

Your character suddenly notices that mold is growing on the backs of most of the other characters. Avoid them — stay at least 10' away — and warn them!

Your character feels a flash of odd heat, and starts melting! Hold onto yourself with both hands, and warn the others!

Your character suddenly notices there is a giant leech on his (her) back. Tear it off, and attack it! Better warn the others, too.

Messages

Your character suddenly hears something off in the jungle to the right of the path. But the undergrowth is thick; nothing is visible.

Your character gets the feeling that something odd is about to happen.

This is a fake message. Frown, roll 1d20, and tell me the result. Don't worry; it doesn't actually mean anything.

Your character notices that, up in the treetops there are a lot of creatures — snakes, spiders, and bugs of various sorts (giant wasps, dragonflies, etc.)

Your character notices that the jungle is very hot and steamy. Better drink extra water on this trip! Keep an eye out for extra, too.

Your character starts to perspire; it's hot here. Everyone is getting a bit smelly. Think of something to do about it, and share your ideas with the others.

Blaze

You are a small, quiet lady with a big punch, both in melee and magic. As short as a dwarf (ugh!) but much thinner, you are self-conscious about your size. Your red hair, very rare among elves, marks you in a crowd; that's the source of your common name. You came from a poor backwoods "low elf" family, and this is your dark secret. You never talk about your past. You have been a bandit, a notorious criminal, a beggar, a scavenger... Though once an Evil renegade, many years ago, you left the old ways and found success and respect in the world of humans.

You like magic, in all forms; it's the most wonderful thing you've ever found. You absolutely hate poor people, dirtiness and untidiness, and other things that remind you too strongly of your past. You drink too much, in town, but it never loosens your tongue. You occasionally enjoy destruction — the thrill of blowing away groups of enemies during adventures. Sometimes you're a bit "trigger-happy". You now live among well-to-do humans. You aren't married, but have several male friends, who often stay with you.

You know all the others here quite well; you have adventured with them before:

BLONDY, the leading fighter, is a well-built but quiet lady, always polite and patient. She's not too bright, but that doesn't interfere with her reknowned fighting skill. You get along fairly well; sometimes you lend her your *flametongue sword*, especially when Undead are around and you want to stay back and use magic.

SLIM, the human magic-user, is usually very serious. He seems taller than his 6 foot height, since he's very thin. He's been exercising to build up his strength (but without success), and stays healthy by carefully watching his diet. You coordinate spells with him, for obvious reasons. He sometimes acts like a father to you...though you're over six times his age! (A jerk... but a powerful jerk, and very smart. You don't antagonize him.)

SMILEY, the cleric, is sensitive about his weight — well over 200 pounds, but only 5′ 4″ tall. He's outgrown 2 sets of plate armor already, and is stuck with chain mail. You're very, very careful around him; clerics are somehow good at prying out information. And, of course, he's a big help against Undead.

MONTANA, the dwarf, is a grumpy but trusted fighter. She likes to *levitate* during combat, using her magic boots. She's a good fighter, though quite brash. You snipe at each other occasionally, verbally, but are never actually hostile.

THE GHOST, the halfling thief with his *ring of invisibility*, is very independent; he's always sneaking off somewhere. You cooperate with him, but both of you are fairly independent. He's always careful not to get in the way of your magic.

DIGGER, the gnome fighter-thief, is also called "hoser", due to his magic water bottle. His sense of black humor (as all gnomes') is sometimes irritating. You're not sure what his problem is, but he's always watching you; seems to be afraid of something (probably just paranoid). He keeps trying to make friends, but you can tell it's just a false front.

FINDER, the half-elf cleric-ranger, is a little clumsy and sometimes disagreeable. However, his skills are many; his magic helmet and arrow, combined with his ranger skills, enable him to find or read almost anything. It's such a shame; he's lucky to come from a good family, but he's such a goody-goody boob.

Finder

You are more than what you seem. Though exceptionally strong and respectably intelligent and wise, you keep most of your traits hidden. You have camouflaged yourself in apparent mediocrity, so that you seem completely average, or worse. You can be charming if you wish (actual Charisma 14), but you are keeping up a front — that of a slightly clumsy, often disagreeable blend-in-with-the-crowd type. You will become a powerful, dominant force, if all goes according to plan, but it's better at this point to "play the fool" and stay in the background. You are very, very Good, with Lawful tendencies (though still Neutral).

You like collecting information about people, places and things; you keep a notebook. You hate Evil above all, and also dislike the petty squabbles of little-minded people. You used to have several hobbies and widespread interests; however, now you are working for the Church, and don't have much time for other things. Your friends think that you have rooms in town, and indeed you do. However, your real home is in your Church; you keep them "up to date" on the SMART organization, the "underground" activity in the capital, and pass along other information as needed.

You know all the others here quite well; you have adventured with them before:

BLONDY, the leading fighter, is a well-built but quiet lady, always polite and patient. She's not too bright, but that doesn't interfere with her reknowned fighting skill. The two of you were once close, but now she's married. You still watch out for her safety, though.

SLIM, the human magic-user, is usually very serious. He seems taller than his 6 foot height, since he's very thin. He's been exercising to build up his strength (but without success), and stays healthy by carefully watching his diet. He's a bit pompous, and doesn't care for your Goodness.

SMILEY, the cleric, is sensitive about his weight — well over 200 pounds, but only 5′ 4″ tall. He's outgrown 2 sets of plate armor already, and is stuck with chain mail. He's your only close friend here, and wise; he often helps you with spell selection. However, you are not of the same church.

MONTANA, the dwarf, is a grumpy but trusted fighter. She likes to *levitate* during combat, using her magic boots. She's brash, and thinks you're boring, and too Good.

THE GHOST, the halfling thief with his *ring of invisibility*, is very independent; he's always sneaking off somewhere. He pretends you're friends, but you know he just wants the cures; nevertheless, you play along; he seems to need the attention.

DIGGER, the gnome fighter-thief, is also called "hoser", due to his magic water bottle. His sense of black humor (as with all gnomes) is sometimes irritating. And there seems to be an evil streak, deep within him, that he keeps carefully hidden as he tries to gain your friendship.

BLAZE, the little red-haired elf fighter-magic-user, is a real powerhouse. She specializes in "attack-type" magic, and collects magic wands. She seems to pity you, for some unknown reason. You know her secret, but she doesn't realize it (and you'd never tell anyone else): that her red hair reveals her heritage —she must have once lived the rough-and-tumble life of the rare renegade elves. She's quite mysteriously attractive...

Pre-Start: Saving Throw Results

Before starting the adventure, have each player make the following 8 saving throws for his or her character.

Note all failures here; you need not remember the successes. Put an "X" in the row by the character's name under each saving throw failed (by number). In use, when the results of a saving throw are needed, find the number in the first row and read down, noting each "X" as a failure.

The needed Saving Throws are:

A vs. Poison (Encounter T-1)
B vs. Poison (Encounter T-3)
C vs. Breath Weapon (Encounter T-1)
D vs. Spells, no Wisdom or Resistance adjusts (Maze Room #2)
E vs. Spells, no Wisdom or Resistance adjusts (Maze Room #4)
F vs. Spells, no Wisdom or Resistance adjusts (not used)
G vs. Petrification (not used)
H vs. Death (Maze Room #6 or thereafter)

Character	Results							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1. Blondy, Human Fighter								
2. Slim, Human Magic-user								
3. Smiley, Human Cleric								
4. Montana, Dwarf Fighter								
5. Ghost, Halfling Thief								
6. Digger, Gnome Ftr/Thf								
7. Blaze, Elf Ftr/M-U								
8. Finder, ½ Elf Cl/Rng								

TORGEL

13th Level Human Magic-User

Ability Scores
STR: 9
INT: 18
WIS: 13
DEX: 12
CON: 16
CHA: 14

Combat Data
AC normal: -5
AC rear: -5
Armor Type: *bracers of defense* (AC 0)
Hit Points: 40
THACO (unmodified): 16
Alignment: Neutral

Saving Throws*

Paralyzation, Poison, or Death	11
Petrification or Polymorph	9
Rod, staff, or wand	7
Breath Weapon	11
Spells	8

**Add magic bonuses where applicable.*

Racial & Professional Skills:

Spells: 5, 5, 5, 4, 4, 2

Equipment

cloak of protection +3, ring of protection +2, bracers of defense (AC 0), *dagger +2, dagger +1*

Spells Carried:

Level 1: *charm person, detect magic, magic missile* (x3 — 2 already cast), *read magic, shield, unseen servant*
Level 2: *detect invisibility* (x2), *invisibility* (x2), *web*
Level 3: *dispel magic, feign death, fly, tongues, (lightning bolt* and *slow* already cast)
Level 4: *dimension door, polymorph self, Rary's mnemonic enhancer* (x2 — already cast)
Level 5: *hold monster (cone of cold, passwall,* and *teleport* already cast)
Level 6: *death spell, geas*

Normal Equipment

Each character has normal (non-magical) equipment not given on the character sheets (due to lack of room). The following list applies to each character; read it to the players after telling them to write it down. Characters may leave any or all items on board ship while they explore. Players may see this list at any time.

Armor: One spare set of armor (& shield where applicable)
Arms: One of each weapon of proficiency.
Clothing: Normal clothing as desired, 3 outfits maximum.
Herbs: 1 herb pack, with belladonna, garlic, and wolfsbane
Livestock: None (warhorses left back home)
Misc. Equipment: 1 backpack; 5 wax candles; 1 bone mapcase; 1 silver mirror; 2 flasks oil; a 50′ rope; 4 large sacks; 4 small sacks; 1 waterskin (full); 3 iron spikes; 1 tinder box; 2 torches; one special (see below)
Provisions: 2 iron rations
Religious Items: 1 silver holy symbol; 3 vials holy water
Tack & Harness: None
Transport: None
Special Item: Each character may have one item not listed in the Players Handbook. The item may be no larger than 1 cubic foot in size or 20 pounds in weight, and may not interfere with the AD&D® Game It cannot be a weapon of any sort, cannot be alive, and cannot be magical.
Examples: sack of flour or marbles; wand-like stick; apple pie; etc.

In addition, spell casters may take any extra items desired needed for their craft (belt pouches, prayer beads, etc.).

The following items are also available, stored on the boat.

10 human-sized suits of leather armor, 30 sailor's caps, and 30 raincoats

2 goats (male & female), 1 pig (female), 5 piglets, and 1 mule with 1 saddle, 2 saddle blankets, 1 set large saddlebags, 1 harness, and a bit & bridle

4 large iron boxes, 4 large wooden chests, 20 large sacks, and 10 small sacks

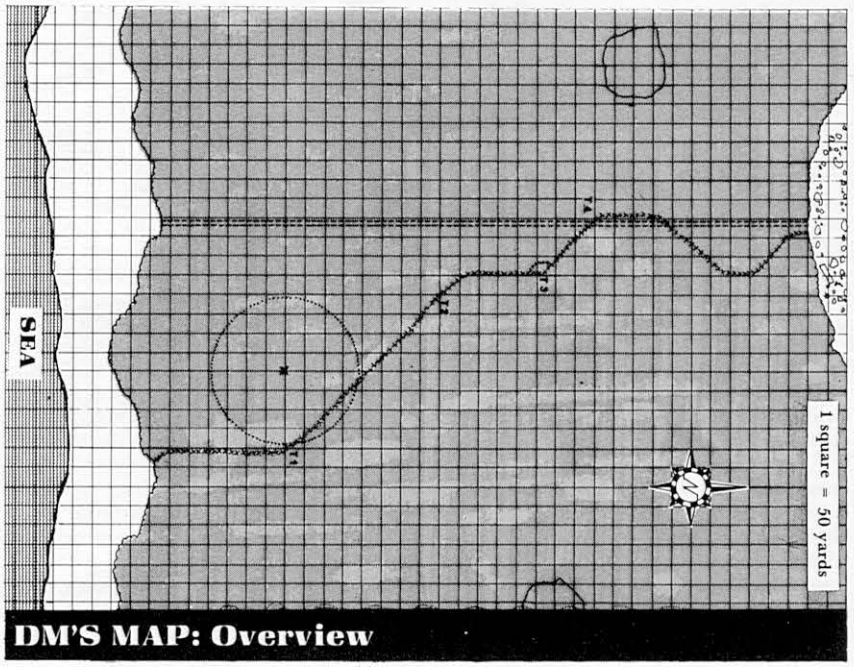
10 hooded (ship's) lanterns, 20 torches, 4 tinder boxes, and 1 barrel (50 flasks) oil

6 barrels of fresh water, 1 barrel of rum, 80 standard rations, 30 iron rations, one ship's stove (attached), and food for the animals

10 quivers (each with 20 arrows) and 1 ballista (not movable) with 10 bolts

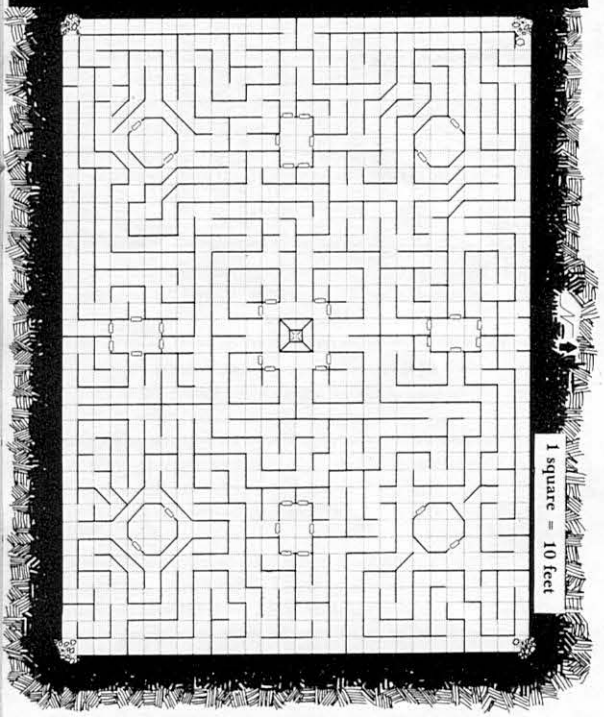
5 flags: 1 of the country, 1 of the capital, 1 white (for surrender), 1 red (for warnings), and 1 of unknown design

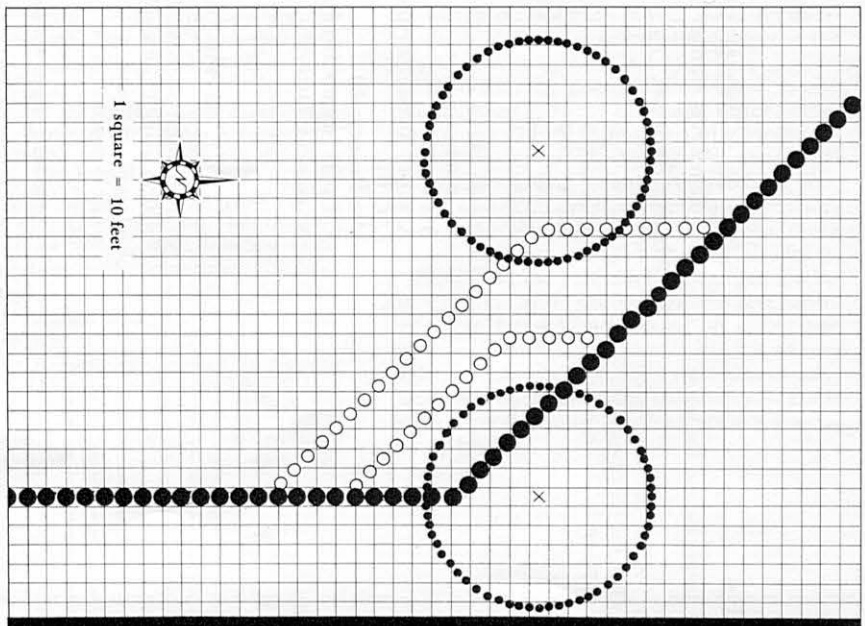
20 empty flasks (for oil, potions, etc.) 20 iron spikes 10 poles, each 10′ long 10 ropes, each 50′ long 2 small lifeboats (capacity: 12 persons each) 3 grappling hooks on 50′ lines



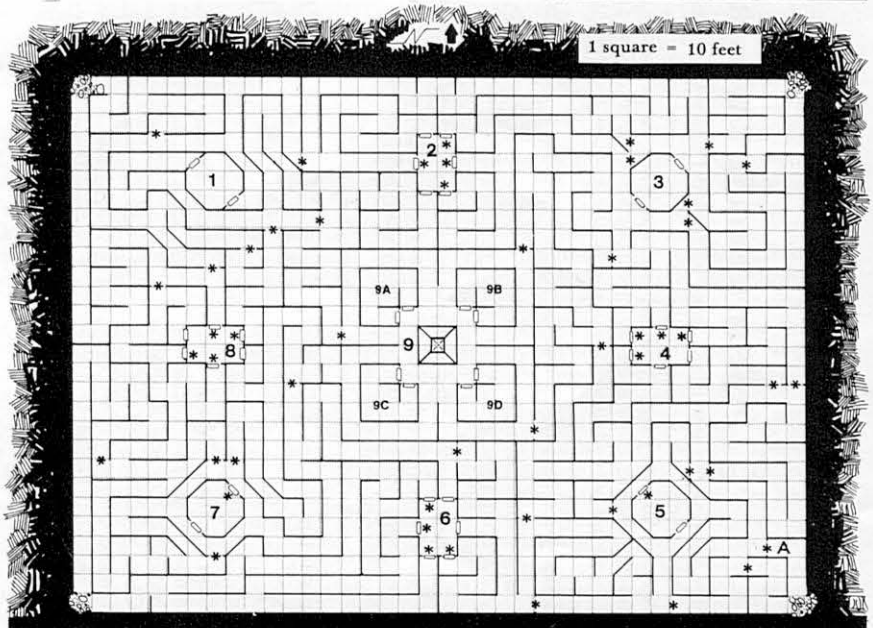
DM'S MAP: Overview

PLAYER'S MAP: Ruins





DETAIL MAP: Encounter T3



DM'S MAP: Ruins

Ghost

10th Level Halfling Thief

Ability Scores

STR: 10 *Doors 1-2, BB-LG 2%*
INT: 9
WIS: 7 *-1 ST penalty*
DEX: 18 *+3 reactions/missiles, -4 AC bonus*
CON: 17 *+2 hp/die, SS 97, RES 98*
CHA: 14 *+10% reactions*

Description

Age: 55 (mature)
Sex: Male
Height: 3′1″ (1″ above average)
Weight: 64 pounds (4 above average)
Alignment: Neutral

Combat Data

THACO (unmodified): 16
AC normal: 0
AC rear: 4
Armor Type: *bracers of defense* (AC 4)
Hit Points: 55

Weapon Proficiencies*: 4; dagger, dart, sling, shortsword.
NPP: -3.
**Cannot use longbow, crossbow, 2-handed sword, nor anything over 12′ long nor over 200 cn weight.*

Saving Throws*	
Poison, paralysis, death	11
Petrification, polymorph	10
Rod, staff, wand	10
Breath weapon	14
Spell	11

** Race bonus NOT included; Add +4 vs. poison, spell, rod, staff, wand.*
** -1 Penalty (Wisdom) where applicable.*

Racial & Professional Skills

Languages: Common, dwarven, elven, gnome, goblin, halfling, orcish.

Special Abilities: *If alone or in advance, surprise 4/6, or 2/6 with door*

Equipment

Magic Items: *bracers of defense* (AC 4), *dagger +3, dagger +2/+3 vs. large, dagger +1, sling +1, shortsword +2; ring of invisibility, Keoghtom's ointment* (4 doses); *potions of healing, polymorph self, water breathing* (2 doses).

Normal Items:
XP: 200,000
Gold:

Digger

Gnome Fighter/Thief (5/8)

Ability Scores

STR: 17 *+1 to hit/+1 damage, +500 cn wt, Doors 1-3, BB-LG 13%*
INT: 8
WIS: 9
DEX: 17 *+2 reactions/missiles, -3 AC bonus*
CON: 15 *+1 hp/die, SS 91, RES 94*
CHA: 9

Description

Age: 119 (mature)
Sex: Male
Height: 3′4″ (2″ below average)
Weight: 84 pounds (4 pounds above average)
Alignment: Neutral

Combat Data

THACO (unmodified)*: 19 (as fighter); 19 (as thief)
AC normal: 1
AC rear: 7
Armor Type: leather & shield
Hit Points: 40

**Thief line MUST be used in backstab attempt; otherwise use fighter line, applying -2 Non-proficiency penalty as needed.*
+1 bonus to hit goblin, kobold -4 AC bonus vs. bugbear, gnoll, ogre, ogre mage, troll, giant, titan

Weapon Proficiencies (Fighter)*: 5; dart, hammer, short bow, spear, bastard sword.
Weapon Proficiencies (Thief)*: 3; club, dagger, sling.
NPP: -2 (Fighter); -3 (Thief).
**Cannot use longbow, crossbow, nor anything over 12′ long or over 200 cn weight.*

Saving Throws*	
Petrification, polymorph	11
Rod, staff, wand	12
Breath weapon	13
Spell	13

** Race bonus NOT included: Add +4 vs. rod, staff, wand, or spell.*

Racial & Professional Skills

Languages: Burrowing mammal, common, dwarven, gnome, goblin, halfling, kobold.

Special Abilities: Infravision 60′ Find slopes 8/10, Unsafe stone 7/10, Depth underground 6/10, Direction of travel underground 5/10.

Equipment

Magic Items: *leather armor +1, shield +2, shortbow +1, dagger +2,* 8 *arrows +1; bag of holding* (500 lb., 70 cubic feet), *decanter of endless water; potions of extra-healing, fire resistance, levitation.*

XP: 100,000/100,000
Gold:

Blondy

8th Level Human Fighter

Ability Scores

STR: 18(49) *+1 "to hit"/+3 damage +1000 cn wt, Doors 1-3, BB-LG 20%*
INT: 6
WIS: 10
DEX: 15 *-1 AC bonus*
CON: 17 *+3 hp/die, SS 97, RES 98*
CHA: 9

Description

Age: 26 (mature)
Sex: Female
Height: 5′3″ (3″ below average)
Weight: 130 pounds (average)
Alignment: Neutral

Combat Data

THACO (unmodified): 14
AC normal: -2
AC rear: 1
Armor Type: plate & shield
Hit points: 80

Weapon Proficiencies: 6; longsword, 2-handed sword, longbow, spear, dart, lance.
NPP: -2

Saving Throws	
Poison, paralysis, death	10
Petrification, polymorph	11
Rod, staff, wand	12
Breath weapon	12
Spell	13

Racial and Professional Skills

Attacks: 3 per 2 rounds

Equipment

Magic items: *plate mail +2, shield +1, longsword +2/+4 vs. giants, 2-handed sword +1, spear +1,* 6 *arrows +1; potions of extra-healing, fire resistance, water breathing* (2 doses).

Normal Items:
XP: 240,000
Gold:

Blondy

You are a real lady, polite and patient. You are tanned, healthy, and in excellent shape — and take pains to stay that way. Exercise is fun. You usually don't talk much, offering short phrases to discussions and shrugging a lot. However, if you get mad, you may start a tirade — repeating yourself often to make a point.

You like flowers and dislike "smarties" — those who show off their intellect. You like flying, swimming and skin diving, and horseback riding. Your husband is also a fighter, and takes jobs guarding businesses, caravans, and so forth. He is less experienced than you are, mainly because his jobs earn less than your adventures. But he handles the money for the family.

You know all the others here quite well; you have adventured with them before:

SLIM, the human magic-user, is usually very serious. He seems taller than his 6 foot height, since he's very thin. He's been exercising to build up his strength (but without success), and stays healthy by carefully watching his diet. You've gotten good advice from him about proper foods.

SMILEY, the cleric, is sensitive about his weight — well over 200 pounds, but only 5′ 4″ tall. He's outgrown 2 sets of plate armor already, and is stuck with chain mail. Sometimes he gets mad when you kid him about that.

MONTANA, the dwarf, is a grumpy but trusted fighter. She likes to *levitate* during combat, using her magic boots. Sometimes the two of you "let your hair down", talking after everyone else has gone to sleep.

THE GHOST, the halfling thief with his *ring of invisibility*, is very independent; he's always sneaking off somewhere. Back when you first met, you almost killed him for trying to pick your pocket; but that's all forgiven and forgotten (well, mostly).

DIGGER, the gnome fighter-thief, is also called "hoser", due to his magic water bottle. His sense of black humor (as with all gnomes) is sometimes irritating. He once saved your life when you were caught in a fiery trap.

BLAZE, the little red-haired elf fighter-magic-user, is a real powerhouse. She specializes in "attack-type" magic, and collects magic wands. You two get along well, but she doesn't like Montana. Sometimes you trade weapons temporarily, especially against undead.

FINDER, the half-elf cleric-ranger, is a little clumsy and sometimes disagreeable. However, his skills are many; his magic helmet and arrow, combined with his ranger skills, enable him to find or read almost anything. He likes you, and used to make passes; however, now that you're married, he just watches you a lot.

Digger

You are a friendly, humorous person, with a great love of cash — to the extent of being a greedy miser. An "average" sized gnome, you're stronger and more dexterous than you look. Despite your fighting skills, you prefer to travel and fight in leather and shield. You are very outgoing but not brash, trying to make friends everywhere. You never mention your secret hobby: collecting gems and rare coins. Sometimes you manage to pick up a few extra things in treasure rooms, but are careful not even to try when there's a magic-user nearby. You love to find rare coins and new gems of all types.

You like jokes and puns (good or bad) and the outdoors. You dislike spell casters of all types, though you're careful not to show it; clerics are useful. You also hate the nickname "Hoser". You have nice gardens at home, both indoor and outdoor; your magic water bottle is useful there, as well as during adventures. After growing up in a burrow community, you moved out to seek your fortune, and now live alone in a large burrow complex under the capital city. It is a complete secret except to one innkeeper, who you are blackmailing to keep it hidden. Your secret hoard of rare coins and gems now totals almost 100,000 gp.

You know all the others here quite well; you have adventured with them before:

BLONDY, the leading fighter, is a well-built, but quiet lady, always polite and patient. She's not bright, but that doesn't interfere with her reknowned fighting skill. She's easy to fool; she thinks you're wonderful, ever since you doused her once when she was on fire.

SLIM, the human magic-user, is usually very serious. He seems taller than his 6 foot height, since he's very thin. He's been exercising to build up his strength (but without success), and stays healthy by carefully watching his diet. You have carefully developed his friendship, and often carry his spellbooks for him in your magic *bag*. When you're ready to retire, you can sell them back to him...from a safe distance.

SMILEY, the cleric, is sensitive about his weight — well over 200 pounds, but only 5′ 4″ tall. He's outgrown 2 sets of plate armor already, and is stuck with chain mail. He's a real clod, real goody-goody, but his good will is needed; he can *raise dead*. And at least he can appreciate the gnomish sense of humor.

MONTANA, the dwarf, is a grumpy but trusted fighter. She likes to *levitate* during combat, using her magic boots. She's one of few that you trust, even if she is a showoff.

THE GHOST, the halfling thief with his *ring of invisibility*, is very independent; he's always sneaking off somewhere. He's your closest ally, as a fellow Thieves' Guild member, but he's afraid of pilfering party treasure; you don't confide in him.

BLAZE, the little red-haired elf fighter-magic-user, is a real powerhouse. She specializes in "attack-type" magic, and collects magic wands. She's the most dangerous in the group; she seems to have a hunch, and often watches you carefully. She's a strange, distant person, one to work on during this adventure.

FINDER, the half-elf cleric-ranger, is a little clumsy and sometimes disagreeable. However, his skills are many; his magic helmet and arrow, combined with his ranger skills, enable him to find or read almost anything. He's a useful tool, easily fooled and an easy mark for a fast cure.

The Ghost

You are an independent person, afraid of being ignored, and try to act mysterious and sly. You're of average build, or just a bit larger. But to keep from being overlooked, you dress and act in mysterious ways. You are insecure, wanting to make a Great Impression on the world that often ignores you. Thus, your ambition has led to great professional success — but everyone still says "oh, another halfling thief", which infuriates you.

You like being noticed by friends and associates, whatever the reason. Sometimes you play tricks just to get their attention. You hate being ignored or taken for granted. You have studied traps and other mechanical devices a lot, and construct new things in your spare time. Back home, you've almost finished a new kind of lock, which uses a dial and numbers. You left home while young, scorning the dull burrow life for a world full of adventure. You have few friends or enemies. SMART is a good organization; they usually appreciate you.

You know all the others here quite well; you have adventured with them before:

BLONDY, the leading fighter, is a well-built but quiet lady, always polite and patient. She's not too bright, but that doesn't interfere with her reknowned fighting skill. A long time ago, she noticed one of your pranks — you lifted her purse — and almost killed you. No sense of humor.

SLIM, the human magic-user, is usually very serious. He seems taller than his 6 foot height, since he's very thin. He's been exercising to build up his strength (but without success), and stays healthy by carefully watching his diet. He's too serious, and suspicious as well, always watching you closely. He still thinks you might be evil (pretty dumb, despite his intelligence).

SMILEY, the cleric, is sensitive about his weight — well over 200 pounds, but only 5′ 4″ tall. He's outgrown 2 sets of plate armor already, and is stuck with chain mail. You let him think that he "reformed" you; he's always good for a cure, now, if properly approached.

MONTANA, the dwarf, is a grumpy but trusted fighter. She likes to *levitate* during combat, using her magic boots. You don't know much about her, and don't particularly want to; she's a loudmouth and a showoff.

DIGGER, the gnome fighter-thief, is also called "hoser", due to his magic water bottle. His sense of black humor (as with all gnomes) is sometimes irritating. But he's okay, overall, and as another Thieves' Guild member, he's your closest friend and ally when things get tough.

BLAZE, the little red-haired elf fighter-magic-user, is a real powerhouse. She specializes in "attack-type" magic, and collects magic wands. You cooperate well, but aren't especially fond of each other. You're careful to check for her actions in combat; no sense getting caught in a *fireball* or something.

FINDER, the half-elf cleric-ranger, is a little clumsy and sometimes disagreeable. However, his skills are many; his magic helmet and arrow, combined with his ranger skills, enable him to find or read almost anything. If it weren't for those skills, he'd be a real loser; a moral extremist, super-Good type, who gets on your nerves constantly. However, you try to stay on his good side (though it rarely appears), in case you need a cure.

a disintegrator will not be destroyed; only objects or creatures at least one foot in length or breadth are affected.)

Nothing and nobody gets a saving throw against the disintegration; all large objects and creatures, magical or otherwise, are affected. Disintegrators do not block spells.

Visitors

Looking up from within the maze, characters can easily see the treetops, and (depending on the angle, walls, etc.) the central obelisk. Snakes, spiders, wasps and dragonflies occasionally move over the maze, though they cannot pass through the force field. Describe some now and then, passing overhead, whenever you wish. A large snake or two might even start following the characters, above them, looking for a hole....

Detect Magic

The cleric spell offers no chance to determine a specific type of effect, only dim or strong magic. The magic-user spell has a 10% chance of detecting the type of magic (Illusion, Enchantment, etc.). But Smiley's *wand of magic detection* has a *100% chance* of determining the type of magic if the user merely concentrates for a full round on the dweomer detected. This fact may become very useful in the scenario, but do not remind the players; merely confirm this information if asked.

Encounter Key

The Clearing

If the party approaches by the trail or road, read the following to the players. If they enter the area through the treetops, run the battle first, describing this area as needed.

> Ahead, the jungle clears somewhat; you approach cautiously. You see a huge area, cloaked in the shadows from the tall jungle trees. Standing tall and clean in the center of the area is a large stone spire, 50 feet tall and about 15-20 feet wide at its base. It reaches to within 20 feet of the treetop canopy.
>
> The area around it is roughly circular, about 400 feet across. Tree branches and vines form a complete canopy overhead, shielding the area from the sky; the ground is littered with branches and some growth, but not much. No trees grow within 200′ of the base of the pillar.
>
> The treetops seem to move; you realize that they are filled with creeping and flying creatures of various types — spiders, snakes, dragonflies, wasps, and who knows what else! But they stay in the treetops, and do not descend.
>
> Before you are a few stone and log ruins. Looking about, you see that they form a rough circle around the pillar, about 200 feet from it; some rubble lies within the circle, but not much.

The pillar is the obelisk; refer to your map of the Ruins. The obelisk is the square in the center of the maze map.

The ruins of buildings lie to all sides of the map, few to the east and west but many to the north and south. No actual structures remain; the rubble is a foot deep at most, with many bare spots. If characters search the building ruins, they find one item from the list below for EACH turn of searching. Give out the items in the order listed; no further items will be found.

1. A small broken ceramic jug, with a drawing of a spider on it.
2. Seven coins made of an unknown reddish metal, each marked with strange runes. (*Comprehend languages* reveals the text as "Garsha Koo" on one side, "One Sarkum" on the other; that's as clear as it gets. Reading the words does not guarantee understanding them....) The metal is silicon-steel, unknown to this world.
3. A 2-inch square piece of fabric made of woven metal of a strange type. (Again, silicon-steel.)
4. One wand. (Magical, but odd and flexible, made of an unknown substance similar to plastic. If struck against any hard object, it glows to a 30′ radius for 1 turn, then goes dark. It can be used as often as desired, and has no charges.)
5. The skeleton of a frog-like human, with two neat holes in the skull, one in front and one behind. (This bullywug was killed by a laser. The remains are easily mistaken for a Grippli's.)
6. A clear gem, made of an unknown mineral. (This sand-gem is worth 5,000 gp, but is easily broken; if so, it crumbles to sand, and is worthless.)

Keep track of the characters' approximate location. The maze on your map occupies a rectangular area in the center of the clearing. It lies below ground level, and characters may walk over it without realizing it. If any character moves any of the rubble or sticks in this area, the maze area below may be dimly seen as a dark space. Light (magical or otherwise) will illuminate a small part of the maze.

Note: This covering cannot be passed, or even scratched (being the equivalent of a huge *wall of force*), and this protective cover extends over the entire obelisk, about 1/2″ from its surface at all points.

The sticks and rubble above the maze can be easily cleared in 16 man-turns of work (all characters working for 2 turns, 4 turns for 4 characters, etc.). If the characters clear some or all of the area, read the following to the players:

> With a little work, you uncover a wondrous sight. A maze lies below you, surrounding the central pillar! With the area cleared, you can easily map the whole thing, if you take two or three turns to do so.*

**If the characters take the time to map the maze, give the players their Map of the Ruins. If they do not map the maze, try to subtly encourage them to do so; otherwise, the players will spend so much time mapping that very little will be accomplished from here on.*

If the characters do uncover the maze:

> You are standing on a perfectly clear but impenetrable surface which covers the whole maze. The floor of the maze seems to be stone, about 15 feet below you. The walls are also stone, about 6 inches thick.
>
> There are a dozen intact buildings in the maze. Four are octagonal, four rectangular, and four irregular ones are in the center area, near the pillar. All the buildings have doors, made of a strange-looking metal.
>
> There seem to be openings at the four corners of the maze. Each of these lies below some old surface ruins. Near the southeast corner (point A on your map) lies an armored skeleton with some unidentifiable bundles.

Warning: Your map is slightly different from the Players' Map. Do not mention, hint at, or reveal those differences.

Entry

At any or all of the four corners, characters may move the rubble with a little digging. When this is done, the rubble cascades down, revealing a slide or pit leading down to the open entrance to the maze. Characters will have no problems climbing or sliding down to any entranceway. (These rubble slides are NOT traps, but are detectable by the dwarven "Detect Unsafe Floor" ability.)

Skeleton

The old human skeleton at point A is clad in non-magical plate mail and shield, now corroded and worthless. The bones show signs of bite marks and gnawing, and all the limbs are somewhat out of place, with some of the bones broken. (Part of the victim appears to have been eaten a few years ago, but most of the body simply rotted away, encased in the armor.)

Three bundles lie near the body. One is a moldy leather backpack, containing normal equipment (now rotted; blanket, food, some candles, etc.) and various normal coins worth a total of 100 gp. A second bundle is a large sack; it contains a rotted mass of something not identifiable, and nothing more. A third bundle is a bunch of 20 wooden branches, each about 15 inches long. These are in fair condition.

In front of the skeleton (by the "*" on your DM's map) lie two short sticks. These seem very similar to those in the bundle, but are only three inches long. One end of each is broken, as if it were torn from a tree; the other end is cut off very cleanly. The victim used them to test the area ahead (see "Zap", above.)

1. Head

This octagonal room is empty except for the objects in the center. A stone pedestal stands in the exact center of the room, 4 feet tall and 1 foot in diameter. Atop it sits a golden object — a 5 inch tall bust of a clean-shaven human with hooked nose, bushy eyebrows, and short hair.

The bust is made of solid gold. If a *detect invisibility* spell is used, or if a thief successfully "finds traps", characters will note that the bust rests on an inner circle atop the pedestal — a crack, possibly indicating a movable center. Success at "removing traps" means that a small wedge has been pushed down into the crack, hopefully jamming the center piece.

Detect magic reveals that the bust is magical; concentration may reveal that the dweomer is an Enchantment. Further concentration may reveal a like dweomer *below* the bust (a ring); and still more concentration may reveal a faint but definite Evocation further below the bust, within the pedestal.

A *dispel magic* at the pedestal will not change anything; the stone is partially galena, a lead ore, and blocks such attempts.

If the bust is lifted, a ring is revealed; the bottom of the bust has a lens-shaped hollowed portion, and the ring sits on the stone under it. If the trap has not been defused, the lifting of the bust causes the center portion (a stone cylinder) to slide up. One foot of it rises from the pedestal, releasing a *fireball* explosion which fills the room and overflows out the door (or doors, if the door opposite the entry has been opened by this time). The central cylinder immediately slides back down into the "closed" position, leaving the pedestal in its original condition; it will not open again unless reset (via the control room in area #9). *(Sorry, but replacing the bust with an equal weight — ala Indy J —* will *trigger the trap...again ala Indy J.)*

The *fireball* inflicts 6-36 (6d6) points of damage. Use the results of Saving Throw D (vs. spells). (Success indicates ½ damage.) Of the 33,500 cubic feet of explosion, the room accounts for only 10,500; about 23,000 cubic feet will expand out of the room. This is 15⅓ map squares (each representing 1500 cubic feet). If both doors are open, divide the explosion evenly out of each one (but you probably won't need to be exact; this goes a long way, and most characters will probably be in range).

The bust weighs 100 pounds, and is worth 5,000 gp. The ring is a *ring of fire resistance* (+ 4 bonus to saving throw, -2 damage per die).

2. First Image

In the center of this room is the six-foot tall head of a man: the same man as that portrayed by the gold bust from Room #1 — hooked nose, short hair, and so forth. It appears fleshy, alive, and very real, as if a giant were imprisoned below the floor. The head has its eyes open, looking at the southwest door (the entrance).

The image is an illusion. Disbelief will not affect it, nor will *dispel magic*; however, the thing is harmless and insubstantial. Characters can walk through it. The image will not respond to anything the characters do, except for one simple action (see below).

The exit — the west door in the north wall — will NOT open, whatever is tried, as long as the image has its eyes open. (Remember that all the other doors are disintegrators.)

If the golden bust is shown to the image in this room, the image will close its eyes. The exit will then open easily when touched from inside the room. However, the door closes itself one turn after it is first opened, and will NOT open when touched on the outside (corridor side). Thus, once all the characters have passed this door, they cannot go back, and are trapped in the maze. The door will close regardless of any attempts to block it, crushing any object or spell effect in its way.

3. Bells

This octagonal room contains only two small golden bells, both sitting on the floor in the center of the room. Each has a 3 inch long handle and a 2 inch tall cup.

The bells are solid gold, with gold clappers. *Detect magic* will reveal that one is magical; concentration may reveal the dweomer to be an Enchantment; and further concentration may reveal an additional dweomer, an Evocation.

If the magical bell is lifted from the floor, a *fireball* explosion goes off beneath it, identical to that in Room #1. Damage is 6-36 (6d6) points. Use the results of Saving Throw E (vs. spells); success indicates ½ damage. Again, the blast will spill out of the room, filling 15⅓ additional map squares.

The non-magical bell is not trapped in any way, and is worth 20 gp. The magical bell is a *bell of blasting*; each time it is rung, a small gem-like object (apparent value 1,000 gp) falls from inside it, and will explode 3 rounds later in a 6d6 *fireball* unless the *bell* is placed over it. (This action merely delays the *fireball* until the *bell* is again picked up.) The *bell of blasting* has a value of 7,500 gp if sold in a sizeable town. It has 12 charges remaining; one charge is used for each *fireball — remember this.* Characters may ring the *bell* later, and a *delayed blast fireball* will be produced each time. If so, players may make the needed saving throws; do not use any more pre-made rolls for *fireballs.*

Either door can be opened easily, whether or not the bells are tampered with.

4. Second Image

This rectangular room contains, once again, the six-foot tall head of the familiar human with the hooked nose. Again, it is facing the entrance (south door on the east wall).

Again, the head is an illusion; however, this time the eyes are closed. The exit (south door) will not open until the eyes have opened and closed again. The eyes can only be opened by ringing a bell in the room; they cannot then be closed unless shown the golden bust. Once this procedure has been completed, the south door will open normally, to a touch. It can be opened from either side.

Note: Either bell can be used.

5. Chalice

This octagonal room contains a pedestal in the center, identical to that in Room #1 (4′ tall, 1′ across), with a golden chalice sitting atop it.

As in Room #1, the center of the pedestal may be found (via *detect invisibility* or *find traps*) to be a movable cylinder. The solid gold chalice has a 5 inch cup atop a 3 inch tall base and stem; it is empty.

Detect magic will reveal that the chalice is magical, and that something within the pedestal is also; concentration may reveal that the chalice bears an Enchantment, as does something in the pedestal; and further concentration may reveal that an Evocation also lies within the pedestal.

If the center of the pedestal is jammed (which occurs if a "remove traps" attempt is successful), it will not move. If the chalice is lifted before the trap is jammed, the central cylinder will rise up 1 foot, revealing a hole through it; a ring lies in this hole. (No explosion occurs.)

After rising, the cylinder immediately returns to its original position. If any character is standing by the pedestal when the cylinder rises, an attempt may be made to grab the ring before it descends. Have the character make a normal "to hit" roll as if for missile fire (dexterity adjustments apply, but not strength); if the character hits AC -2 or better, the ring is successfully grabbed. The ring is another *ring of fire resistance.* In any event, the small compartment below the ring will not be disturbed; and it is this compartment, not the ring, which bears the Evocation — a *fire trap.* It plays no part here. As a minor point of interest, the pedestal is partly galena, a lead ore, which will foil *dispel magic* attempts at negating the Evocation.

Note that this room may be easily avoided, but the Chalice will be needed to pass Room #6. Characters may return to this room easily; both doors will remain open.

6. Third Image

This rectangular room again holds the six-foot image of the now-familiar human head with the hooked nose. Again, it is in the center of the room and again it cannot be affected except by certain actions. It faces the entrance (east door) with its eyes closed; the exit (east door on the north wall) will not open until the eyes have

been opened and closed again. The required procedure runs as follows:

Step #	Action	Result
1	Ring a bell.	The image opens its eyes.
2	Put liquid in the Chalice; then show the Chalice to the image.	The liquid disappears.
3	Show the golden bust to the image.	The image closes its eyes.

After the procedure is complete, the exit will open at a touch.

Only one mistake can cause problems. If the Chalice does *not* contain some liquid when shown to the image, find the result of the holder's Saving Throw H (vs. death). If successful, the victim takes 10 points of damage; if failed, the victim is reduced to 0 hp (but may be recovered by quick curing, with no loss except for the points of damage).

The liquid can be any type — water, wine, blood, potion, etc. Interruptions of the procedure do not cause problems. As soon as the 3 required actions are completed, regardless of other activity, the eyes close and the door is free to be opened.

The exit can only be opened from inside the room. It closes itself one turn after being opened. Thus, after characters have passed through this room, they cannot later return (identical to the effect in Room #2).

Note: This concludes the use of the pre-made saving throws. Any further saving throws required must be made by the players as needed.

7. Apples

This octagonal room is empty except for a golden serving platter on the floor in the center of the room, with 3 golden apples upon it. The platter is one foot wide and two feet long, crafted with golden handles on each end. The apples are 3 inches, 4 inches, and 5 inches in diameter.

Detect magic will reveal that the tray and apples are magical; concentration may reveal that all the dweomers are Enchantments; and further concentration may reveal that the two smallest apples also bear Evocations.

The tray is a *platter of purity*; any consumables placed on its surface will become purified in 3 rounds. Poisons are negated; unfortunately, potions are turned to pure water. No living thing can be affected, nor can any non-consumable items. The tray is worth 5,000 gp if sold in a sizable town.

The apples are *apples of chaos*; two have additional dweomers. If an *apple of chaos* is thrown, its material form disappears where it lands, but its image remains — a phantasm — affecting all creatures within 40′ of it. All victims are affected as if by the 5th level Illusionist spell *chaos*, suffering *confusion* (as the druid spell): normal fighters (not paladins or rangers), illusionists, creatures with Intelligence 4 or less, and monsters which do not use magic may each make a saving throw vs. spells to avoid the effect; no other creatures gain a saving throw. The *confusion* lasts for 20 rounds, until the phantasmal *apple* disappears; the image (and the effect) may be removed by a *dispel magic* spell, but checked against 20th level magic use. An *apple of chaos* is worth 3,000 gp if sold in a sizable town.

The *platter* and *apples* may be freely picked up and examined without incident. *Dispel magic* will not affect them in any way. Note that this room may be easily avoided, but an *apple* will be needed to pass Room #8. Characters may return to this room easily; the door will remain open.

8. Fourth Image

This rectangular room once again holds the six-foot tall image of the human head with the hooked nose. Again, it is in the center of the room and again it cannot be affected except by certain actions. It faces the entrance (north door on the west wall) with its eyes open; the exit (south door on the east wall) will not open until the following procedure has been completed in order:

As before, once all the steps are complete, the procedure is finished; *interruptions do not change the results*. In other words, if Steps 1 through 5 occur in that order, but with other actions between some or all of the steps, the result will still be success. Mark off Step 1 when the bust is first shown, then wait for them to complete Step 2 (possibly after other actions), mark it off, wait for Step 3, and so forth.

Step#	Action	Result
1	Show the golden bust to the image.	The image closes its eyes.
2	Ring a bell in the room.	The image opens its eyes.
3	Show an *apple* to the image.	The *apple* disappears.
4	Put liquid in the Chalice; show the Chalice to the image.	The liquid disappears.
5	Show the golden bust to the image.	The image closes its eyes.

After this is complete, the exit may be opened normally. No further activity of any kind will affect the image.

Several incidents may occur if everything is not done perfectly. As before, if the Chalice is shown without liquid in it, the holder of the Chalice must make a saving throw vs. death; if failed, the victim is reduced to 0 hp (but may be recovered by fast curing, with no losses except for the points of damage); if successful, the victim still takes 20 points of damage (double the previous situation).

In addition, whenever an *apple* is shown to the image, it disappears — whether or not this occurs at the proper point in the procedure. (The *apple* will *not* disappear if the image doesn't see it — i.e. if the eyes are closed.) If the *apple* is one of the two smaller ones (the ones with Evocation dweomers in addition to Enchantments), a small gem-like object remains when the *apple* disappears. The gem has an apparent value of 1,000 gp, but will explode in 3 rounds as a *fireball*, inflicting 6-36 (6d6) points of damage; each victim may make a saving throw vs. spells to take ½ damage. The room contains only 9,000 cubic feet of volume, so 24,500 cubic feet of *fireball* will spill out into nearby corridor (evenly through all open doors); this is 16⅓ map squares.

Thus, the party could conceivably lose all their *apples* in this encounter by showing more of them to the image than necessary. Note also that the magical *bell* will spew forth a *fireball* with the same sort of effects. (See Room #3 for details.)

Notes: Whatever else occurs, if all 3 *apples* are "fed" to the head, this has the same effect as completing the procedure; the eyes close and the exit is freed. Note also that the party probably has an excellent idea of the route from here onwards, and a *passwall* spell may be used to avoid all interaction with the image, allowing ALL the *apples* to be kept!

The exit will, once again, close itself one turn after being opened, and cannot be opened from the outside (corridor side). It will crush anything left to block it.

9. Center

As you approach the center, the base of the obelisk is visible amidst four buildings. There is no sign of life or treasure.

Each of the buildings contains various interesting items, as detailed below. The corridors around them can be freely explored (except for the "*" areas, of course). None of the doors are disintegrators. Whenever any door is opened (in the usual way), a short corridor is revealed, apparently turning left or right (as applicable) to a lit area. The light always seems dim, as if from torchlight. In the room descriptions, treat the entryways as "corridor in", leading to a 20′ square "room" area.

9a. Northwest Building

In the alcove in the southeast corner of the room, a massive golden throne sits in the corner, facing northwest. Its seat, back, and arms are lined with plush velvet cloth. Sitting in the throne, apparently asleep, is a familiar figure — a clean-shaven human male with a hooked nose and short hair! He is wearing an orange robe and a pair of red boots.

The party can easily surprise the magic-user; he is sound asleep, and not expecting company. If awakened and confronted by the party, he will immediately surrender and negotiate. He is Torgel, a

13th level Neutral Magic-User, known to the characters by name and reputation; he used to live in the capital!

Torgel will use Alignment Language only if absolutely necessary to convince the party of his peaceful intentions. He will reveal neither his level, nor his spells memorized. He has a strange story to tell, if permitted. He was exploring this area with a party about 2 years ago, in search of this obelisk. They lost a few members to giant insects and spiders, but pushed on. Then they were ambushed by bullywugs — hordes of them. In the fray, Torgel was forced to *teleport* out; somehow he appeared here, by the obelisk, trapped in the maze. He had intended to *teleport* home, and doesn't know what happened. He lost his spellbook in the bullywug fray.

Torgel knows that the maze can be deadly, and has given up attempting to escape. Room 9B feeds him whenever he wants. He is half mad from boredom, and eager for escape. He knows of the control panels in room 9C, but has not experimented with them; he had planned to do so in another year or two, if no help came.

Torgel is 52 years old, but in remarkably good shape. His appearance is clean; his sanity is unstable, due to his imprisonment, but will improve in time. He tends to be opinionated and not very trusting; his personality is diplomatic but aloof. His disposition is even-tempered, and his nature is forgiving but not soft-hearted. He is truthful when it suits him, slightly greedy, somewhat irreverent, but otherwise normal.

If the party does not watch him continuously, Torgel may decide to cast his *geas* spell (if convenient and if there are no witnesses to cause trouble) on a party member, ordering the character to do everything possible to return him safely to the capital city. (See PHB pg. 84 if needed; casting time is 4 segments, and the effect is delivered by touch.) The victim has no saving throw, and must comply or grow sick and die in 1-4 weeks. If caught out, Torgel will reveal the *geas*; the party must help him and keep him safe or they will lose their comrade! (*Dispel magic* and *remove curse* will not affect a *geas*; only a *wish* will do.)

Note: Any person sitting in the throne in Room 9A will inadvertently provide the image used by the maze machinery. The maze runs the images in Rooms 2, 4, 6, and 8, and creates the bust found in Room 1. Torgel actually had no idea that all that was happening. He does remember some odd dreams about waking, sleeping, eating and drinking, and so forth.)

9b. Northeast Building

This room contains a magical tree, 10′ tall, and a magical pool of water. If any creature in the room thinks of any type of food, buds appear on the tree branches; they blossom out in 2 rounds, revealing the type of food desired — steak, pudding, salad, bread, or whatever! The tree will produce an unlimited amount of food.

The pool is pure water, only an inch deep and a foot across. However, it cannot be emptied, magically remaining full at all times.

Nothing else is in this room. The tree is apparently growing from the solid stone; the pool is merely a slight indentation in the floor. If the tree is harmed in any way, it will stop producing food. If the pool is evaporated by heat, it will not refill.

9c. Southwest Building

> The north and west walls of this room (around the corners from the entrance corridors) are covered with levers, dials, buttons, and other technological devices. Two plush chairs sit before them, one for each wall.

There is nothing else in the room; nothing in the room is a trap. The devices control the following things:

MAIN SWITCHES:

One large switch is located on each wall; they are toggle types, up-and-down.

North Wall: Nothing in this room will function unless this switch is in the "up" position; it is currently down. When pushed up, the south and west (outer) walls of the room light up, showing a phantasmal image of the entire maze from above —just like the Players' Map. However, many of the doors on the map are lit with a green light (as explained for "Buttons", below).

West Wall: This switch is "up", and will not move unless the main power switch (above) is "on". If power is on, pulling this switch down causes a message to appear across the image map, flashing every two seconds. It is in an unknown tongue. *Comprehend languages* will reveal it to say *"Warning: Defense Cutoff Armed. Switch Back to Negate; Turn Power Off to Cutoff."* Thus, if the Main Switch is pulled down while the message is flashing, the "Defense" will be negated. If this occurs, the force field above the maze and around the obelisk disappears. Again, this switch cannot be moved while the power is off.

If the power is then restored, a different message is displayed, again in the strange tongue: *"Warning: Defense Field Off. Push Defense Switch UP to Restore."* If the large switch on the west wall is pushed back into the "up" position, the force field will return, and will remain even if the control room power is cut off.

Note that there is no visible change when the force field is turned off; characters might not realize that they are free to climb or fly out of the maze, except for bits of rubble or creatures that fall in.

BUTTONS:

There are 80 buttons, 20 per row, two rows per wall. They control all the doors in the maze; the upper buttons cause the doors to open, and the lower ones, to close. The first four buttons control the doors to Room #1, the next 12 for Room #2, and so forth. When a door is open, the image map (see above) causes the door to light up in green; when closed, the light goes off. Thus, many of the doors on the image map are currently lit.

LEVERS:

There are two levers along each wall. All are in the "up" position, but may be pulled down. After being pulled down, a lever will automatically return to upright position unless firmly held. Holding a lever causes no further effect.

North Wall

Left Lever: Causes all Doors to close.

Right Lever: Causes all Doors to open.

West Wall

Left Lever: Causes all Disintegrators to light up on the image map in red light; if pulled again, reverses the effect.

Right Lever: Turns off all Disintegrators.

DIALS:

There are dozens of dials mounted on the walls. Whenever any button is pushed or a lever activated, various dials will jiggle, and give various readings; however, these cannot be interpreted.

Note: The power circuitry for the dials, levers, etc. is not wires, but rather veins of metallic ore in the walls — sort of a printed circuit of rock. Only the north and west walls, upon which the devices are located, bear these circuits; the outer walls are normal solid stone. A *passwall* through the circuitry would result in a powerful electrical explosion filling the entire building, and spilling out into all the corridors of area #9 if any door is open. Victims in Room 9C get no saving throw; any other victim may make a saving throw vs. spells to take ½ damage, but with a -4 penalty to the roll. The explosion inflicts 10-200 (10d20) points of electrical damage.

9d. Southeast Building

This storage room contains 300 sheets of an unknown metal, each 2′ by 5′, and less than 1/32 of an inch thick. The metal is silicon-steel, and cannot be damaged except by magic. Each sheet weighs 100 coin (10 pounds). The metal may only be sold as a curiosity; it cannot be easily worked except at incredibly high temperatures. It is worth 100 gp per sheet as a novelty.

There is a secret compartment under the floor; the compartment can be detected by a *detect invisibility* spell, but cannot be opened except by a *knock* spell. Within lies an odd device, about 8 inches long; most of it is handle, with a roller on one side of the end, and a short knife edge on the same end, opposite the roller. If two sheets of the strange metal are placed with a slight overlap, and the overlap rolled with this device, the metal will fuse together, forming a single unbroken sheet; no crack or edge will remain. The knife edge will cut the metal easily, without any force needed. If this tool is found, the value of the metal is 10 times that given above — but only if the tool is sold along with it.

Conclusion

If and when the characters escape from the maze, they may easily return to the ship. The denizens of the jungle will not bother them during this trip, unless they take the aerial route. Tell the players that their characters return victorious, with good news for the King; an obelisk has been found, along with several strange new items.

How Game Reviews Are Done

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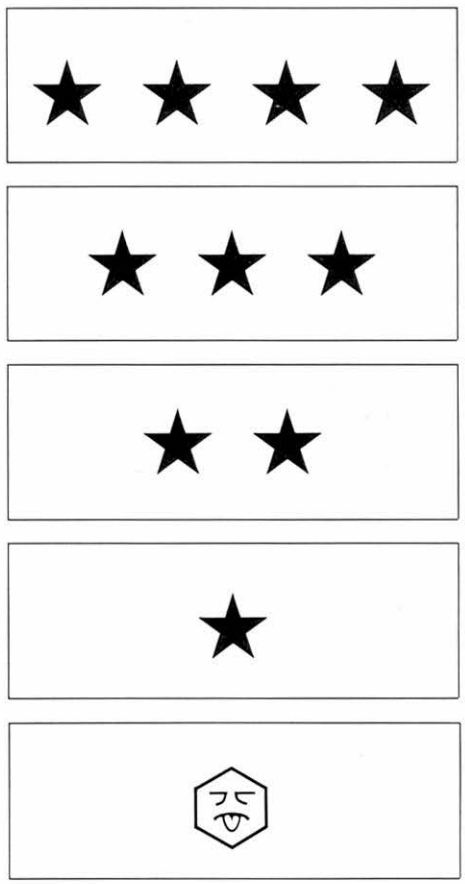
by Errol Farstad

Greetings fellow members and gamers! Have you been hesitant to spend your life savings on a new and untried game, or even one that's been on the market for a while? Are you unsure as to which game would be worth the $12-$15 (average price) it costs to give you the role playing excitement you crave? Fear not, my trepedacious spenders of specie! Yours truly will try to quell your spendroleplayingmoneyophobia (the fear of wasting your money on a game that turns out to be a turkey).

POLYHEDRON™ Newszine's new game review column is designed to anticipate and answer the questions that you, as prospective purchasers, will have about role playing game products currently on your hobby shop shelves. (By the by, if anyone has suggestions for a name for this review column, send them to me care of RPGA™ Network HQ, and I will certainly make sure that the most noteworthy ones are mentioned. Quick! You've only got 30 days, so send in your idea after you're through reading this issue!)

Since role playing games are my area of expertise, I'll be limiting my reviews to those, along with their various supplements and aids (unless there is an overwhelming demand for a review of some particular game from another category). For the time being, I will be sticking to games that are four years old or less; you've probably had time to assess the older ones for yourself.



Rest assured that I shall be an impartial reviewer. This service is my contribution to the RPGA™ Network; I do not work for any game manufacturer, and I buy my games right off the shelf so that they're in the same condition as you would find them.

How will I review these games? First, let's take a peek at what I'll be looking for:

A) **Packaging:** Does the cover or exterior appeal to the eye? Does it jump out and say, "Buy me!" or does it make one gag? Is it like opening a treasure chest, or getting stuck with a killer mimic? What is included within the box?

B) **Rules and Explanations:** Are the rules easily understood, or does one need an interpreter of Gibberish? How are characters generated? What is the combat system like? How easy is it to learn the rules?

C) **Degree of Difficulty:** What kind of players can learn this game? My rating system for this is as follows:

D) **Miscellaneous (Pet Peeves):** This covers anything else I might miss. For example, what does the artwork within the rulebooks look like? (Does it leave no room for doubt between a crossbow and a longbow?) Is there other information within the rules that makes the game more interesting? Is there a story line? What are the logistics involved? Is there background information? How is the game organized?

E) **Overall:** What are the overall effects of this game? Will it satisfy your role playing urges and leave you hungry for more, or will you feel a touch of indigestion — nay, perhaps even nausea — after playing? Is it worth the price?

Each of these categories (with the exception of C above) will be rated from 1-10 with 1 as the lowest and 10 as the highest possible score. Players, gamemasters, and companies should all be well aware that a rating of 9 or 10 on anything will be an extremely rare occurence. I am very demanding in terms of quality in the games I purchase, as I suppose all prospective buyers of game components are; for in the long run, that is what makes a good game.

Here's the rating system:

Rating	Quality
1-2	**Poor.** Inferior quality in this section.
3-4	**Fair.** Sub-normal quality in this section, but worth the money if you're desperate.
5-6	**Good.** Average quality, likeable game; worth the money.
7-8	**Excellent.** Above average quality and enjoyability, well worth the money spent.
9-10	**Superior.** The quality in this section goes above and beyond the call of duty.

Should you find a game rated 9 or 10 in all categories, RUN, don't walk to your nearest hobby or game store and buy it immediately!

Rating	Difficulty
1	Inexperienced players (0-6 months). Anyone (10 in 10) can learn the game easily*.
2	Some role playing experience necessary (6-12 months). Most players (7 in 10) can learn and play the game easily.
3	Experience necessary (1-2 years). A few players (4 in 10) can learn and play this game easily.
4	Expert (2 + years experience needed). Very few players (1-2 in 10) can learn and play this game easily.

Now turn to page 38 for this issue's review.

**A game is defined as "easily learned" if the average person can play and enjoy it after reading through the rules once or twice. Such a game is definitely worth the money.*

The Grond Family & Friends

The New Rogues Gallery

Six tough characters for your fantasy campaign

by Roger E. Moore © 1985 TSR, Inc.

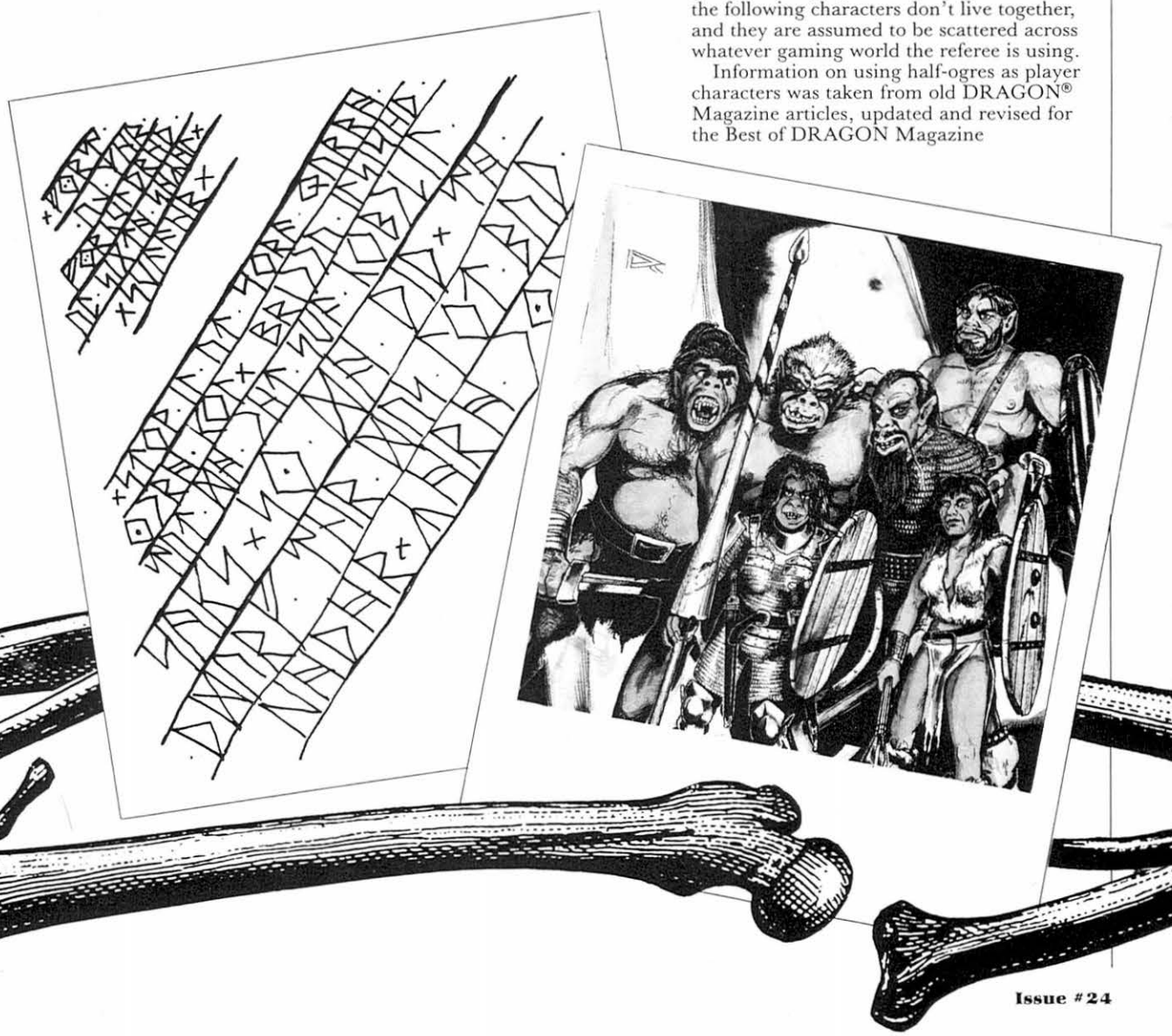
Most of the characters that the average role-playing gamer creates in the course of a campaign are assumed to be no relation to one another — and for good reason. It wouldn't really do to have Mung the dwarf fighter be the brother of Alfar the elven magic-user, with Tia the Merciless (a half-orc assassin) as their mother. Even fantasy has its limits.

But there are exceptions. A friend of mine who currently lives in Reno once had an elaborate family tree of elven player characters of every conceivable alignment, class, and sex; all of them had, at one time or another, been his player characters. He developed a history and background for the family so detailed that his characters gave their quests an air of richness and "reality" usually found only in fantasy novels and epic sagas.

In the eight years that I've gamed, I too have developed a family of characters like Michael's elves — but the characters I played were a little different....

The Grond family, and several of their friends and former friends, are presented here for your enjoyment. Referees may use these characters in random encounters, or develop entire adventures around them for groups of varying levels. Note that some of the following characters don't live together, and they are assumed to be scattered across whatever gaming world the referee is using.

Information on using half-ogres as player characters was taken from old DRAGON® Magazine articles, updated and revised for the Best of DRAGON Magazine



Anthology, Volume IV, soon to be appearing in a hobby shop near you. Using full ogres as player characters is my own idea and I take the blame for it. The double charisma scores indicate each character's charisma with respect to other races and ogres (or half-ogres), respectively.

Some of these characters are monster types who developed into characters when the regular PCs were "out of contact" for a particular adventure, and the referee kindly allowed them to gain life as full PCs for a while. A few have been mentioned in previous DRAGON® Magazine and POLYHEDRON™ Newszine articles. Now, at least, you'll know to whom I was always referring.

Here's hoping a few people become inspired enough to start some dwarven, gnomish, and halfling clans.

John Grond

Player: Roger Moore
16th Level Half-Ogre Fighter

STR: 18(00)
INT: 12
WIS: 12
DEX: 12
CON: 20
CHA: 10/18

AC Normal: 1;
AC Rear: 4
Hit Points: 156
Alignment: Chaotic Neutral
Deity: Unidentified war god

Weapon Proficiencies: two-handed sword, shortsword, trident, footman's flail, composite longbow, siege ballista, undersea combat net, footman's mace.

Special Abilities: attacks 2/1; infravision (60′), 12% chance of hearing noise, can detect invisibility 55% of the time, regenerates 1 hp/hour, invulnerable to psionic attacks, special saving throw bonuses of +1 vs. poison and +4 vs. dragon breath, skilled at trapping and swimming, fights well underwater.

Equipment: *bracers of defense* (AC 4), *bastard sword +3, shield +2* (large), *ring of water breathing*, composite longbow (special construction allowing use of strength bonuses on "to hit" and damage rolls), 50′ (or more) of rope.

Description: John Grond is 7′7″ tall and weighs 368 lbs. He has dark, earth-brown skin, a thick, short beard, and long black hair, which he keeps tied in a ponytail that hangs down his back. His skin is badly scarred, but he seems unaffected by his old wounds. His eyes are purple with black pupils. Furs and animal skins make up his only dress.

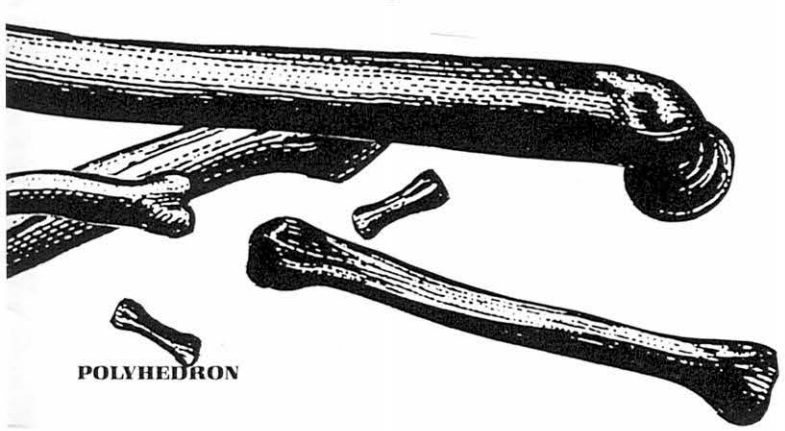
History: Little is known of John Grond's past, other than that he was intensely involved in adventuring for most of his young adult life. It is rumored that he has never been killed, though this has not been proven. He has made few friends and many enemies in his travels, including creatures and powers of every race and alignment in the latter category.

It is commonly believed by those who traveled with him that he has made extensive use of magical forces such as *wishes* to increase his personal powers to their limits. Some fear he may be headed for quasi-deity status, though others doubt his drive to do so.

Personality: Those few who know him describe him as cold and ruthless — completely unconcerned about the fate of anyone save himself and his closest allies. He makes friends quickly with ogres and trolls, using unarmed combat against unruly ogres or allies. Demihumans are disliked very much, and humans are tolerated for whatever use they may have toward keeping him alive on adventures. Oddly, he will not attack halflings, cursing them as too low to be worth his "attention".

Besides the standard equipment noted above, he carries whatever other gear would be suitable for a particular quest. He claims to have little use for powerful protective devices, relying instead on his wits and nonmagical equipment.

Current Residence: Currently, John Grond lives with his mate Amagar, his children, and his ogre follower Boron, in a rambling, filthy log mansion on a plain. In his mid-twenties, he tends to wander from home on odd quests at will. He entertains dreams of setting up a nation and army of ogrekind, with himself as the ruler — a dream he is capable of fulfilling.



Amagar Grond

Player: Georgia Moore
4th Level Half-Ogre Cleric

STR: 16
INT: 12
WIS: 13
DEX: 12
CON: 18
CHA: 8/16

AC Normal: -7;
AC Rear: -1
Hit Points: hp 40
Alignment: Chaotic Neutral
Deity: Unidentified war god

Weapon Proficiencies: footman's mace and flail.

Special Abilities: infravision (60'), 12% chance to hear noise, reads common tongue.

Equipment: *mace +2, ring of protection +3, ring of fire resistance, bracers of defense* (AC 2), *shield +5* (medium, extremely rare), 5-8 scrolls with assorted clerical spells of random levels, other magical maces and flails.

Description: Amagar Grond is 7′ tall and weighs 262 lbs. She has light yellow-brown skin, black hair, and deep blue eyes with white pupils. She's surprisingly good looking for a half-ogre, a fact that does not go unnoticed by other ogres and even a few human males. Her personality, however, is enough to drive potential suitors crazy after only a few minutes.

History: Her personal history before she met John Grond is unknown to anyone, though she has claimed to have had any number of occupations and to have been any number of places. Amagar became John's companion from the day she first met him. Though she enjoys trickery and leads an extremely free-willed life, the two have gotten along well together despite violent fights that erupt at least once a day.

Personality: She is an utterly amoral liar with a strong streak of prankster. She lives a hedonistic and lazy life at the primitive manor home that she, her husband, their children, and Boron (their ogre servant) inhabit. The wide assortment of clerical magic items that John has brought her over the years, along with her natural mischievousness and hot temper, have made her dangerous far beyond what would be expected for a low level cleric.

Amagar's only fear is of dragons, particularly black ones (one of them nearly killed her in an early adventure). Since that time, she has (with John's assistance) collected the most powerful protective devices she can find to keep herself safe. When first encountering danger, Amagar will immediately look for a safe place to cast her spells, letting John and other fighters make direct attacks. Her usual spells are *cure light wounds* (x2), *detect magic, hold person,* and *detect traps.* Amagar will fight only as a last resort, attempting to flee or get to John Grond if at all possible.

Current Residence: Amagar only rarely adventures now that she has children, and she spends her time at home, raising them to become warriors. Koor Grond, her son, is 5 years old; Koko and Sorcia are twin girls 4 years old. All of the children are chaotic, unpredictable, and prone to violence.

But although he is as dull as a fencepost, Boron is nonetheless one of the most powerful ogres alive. His natural strengths are reinforced by the assortment of magical items that his employer, John Grond, has given him. Having been exceptionally well treated and given so much, Boron has become slavishly faithful to John Grond to the nth degree. It has been said that Boron worships no deity but John, and this may be so. Boron will obey any order given him by John, though John has never had his follower do anything self-destructive. Boron will listen to no one else, and is exceptionally dangerous if he is given orders when John isn't around.

Despite his extensive training in boxing and wrestling, Boron prefers to use weapons in any major conflict.

Current Residence: John Grond's mansion.

Boron the Moron

Player: Roger and Georgia Moore
*Full Ogre****

FREQUENCY: *Unique*
ARMOR CLASS: *-1*
MOVE: *9″*
HIT DICE: *4 + 1 (32 hp)*
TREASURE TYPE: *See below*
NO. OF ATTACKS: *1*
DAMAGE/ATTACK: *1-10 or by weapon type + 4 (for excep. STR)*
SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*
SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*
MAGIC RESISTANCE: *Standard*
INTELLIGENCE: *Low*
ALIGNMENT: *Chaotic evil*
SIZE: *L*
PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*
EFFECTIVE CHARISMA: *4/8*

Deity: *See below*

Weapon Proficiencies: most swords, axes, and pole axes (no missile weapons).

Special Abilities: + 1 "to hit" (for exceptional strength),infravision (60′), 15% chance to hear noise, + 4 bonus to saving throws vs. magical *fear*** effects, trained in unarmed combat and swimming.

Equipment: Non-magical armor equal to *plate mail + 1, shield + 2* (large), *flametongue longsword + 1, bastard sword + 2,* assorted protective magical rings and potions.

Description: Boron the Moron is 8′5″ tall and weighs 584 lbs. He has the dark brown skin and long, blue-black hair and beard typical of his species of ogre. His eyes are purple, with milky-white pupils.

History: John discovered Boron at an orcish camp where the ogre was serving as a mason and rocklayer. Though quite content with his simple work, Boron adapted well to the life of a bodyguard and adventurer. He knows no fear, and actually gains a + 4 to saves vs. *fear* (despite his low wisdom). His only known battle tactic is to charge the enemy and strike out randomly at everyone who is not an ogre or half-ogre.

Personality: Boron is dull-witted and slow (effective INT = 5), understanding only the ogre tongue and a smattering of common. He should have been a chieftain, considering his size and strength, but the complexities of the position were beyond his mental capacity. Boron has a basic insensitivity to other beings, and is callous, foul, and vengeful. He has a particular dislike for any non-ogre under 6′ in height.

Snowy Humber

Player: Roger Moore
8th Level Half-Ogre Fighter

STR: 18(00)
INT: 14
WIS: 10
DEX: 15
CON: 18
CHA: 8/16

AC Normal: 1;
AC Rear: 8
Hit Points: 87
Alignment: Neutral
Deity: None acknowledged

Weapon Proficiencies: battleaxe (used one-handed), most swords, long bow, footman's mace.

Special Abilities: infravision (60′), 12% chance to hear noise.

Equipment: *battleaxe + 5, shield + 5* (medium), leather armor.

Description: Snowy was so named because his rough hair is pure white. He has dark yellow-brown skin, dark purple eyes with gray pupils, and he wears no beard to hide his incredibly ugly, bestial face. He stands 8′8″ tall and weighs 573 lbs. His height and powerful build make him look like a heavily muscled ogre. A former companion of John Grond, Snowy now wanders across various planes with his friend, an intelligent, talking gorilla named Cho (20 hp).

History: As with all members of the Grond clan and associates, getting a history of Snowy Humber is very difficult. He left John's service by accident after opening a *cursed teleportation scroll,* and thereafter became chieftain of a small human tribe of barbarians. Afterwards he discovered Cho in a zoo pen, freed him, and the two became wanderers.

Personality: Snowy's only magical possessions are the powerful ones noted above, as he enjoys collecting treasure and spending it like water. Cho, who uses *bracers of defense* (AC2), a *ring of protection + 1* and a *bastard sword + 2,* is equally short-sighted. Neither have any goals further than getting rich in the quickest possible manner and seeing as much of the universe as possible. They are not choosy about traveling companions.

Snowy has talked much about his travels to those who have adventured with him, and appears very familiar with advanced technology (though he refuses to use it and seems to fear it). Being exceptionally bright, Snowy has learned and remembered much, and may serve as a source of unique information on other planes.

Snowy does not seem to harbor any prejudices toward any race, alignment, sex, class, or cult. He does, however, loathe undead, having once been slain by a lich.

Current Residence: Unknown.

Jangis Khan

Player: Roger Moore
Full Ogre

FREQUENCY: *Unique*
ARMOR CLASS: *1*
MOVE: *9″*
HIT DICE: *4 + 1 (31 hp)*
TREASURE TYPE: *See below*
NO. OF ATTACKS: *1*
DAMAGE/ATTACK: *1-10 or by weapon type + 3*
SPECIAL ATTACKS: *See below*
SPECIAL DEFENSES: *See below*
MAGIC RESISTANCE: *Standard*
INTELLIGENCE: *Average*
ALIGNMENT: *Neutral*
SIZE: *L*
EFFECTIVE CHARISMA: *5/10*
PSIONIC ABILITY: *Nil*

Deity: *Formerly Vaprak; none now acknowledged.*

Weapon Proficiencies: pole axes, battle axes, and clubs only (no missile weapons).

Special Abilities: infravision (60′), 15% chance to hear noise.

Equipment: shield, *banded mail + 2* (shrinks or expands to fit any wearer from halfling to ogre size — a gift from John Grond), *ring of fireproofing* (makes wearer immune to any fire causing 6 points of damage or less per round; also reduces all other normal and magical fire damage by half), *axe + 1* (functions as a bardiche), several throwing clubs, assorted minor magical items.

Description: Jangis Khan is 8′4″ tall, and weighs 499 lbs. He has yellow skin, shoulder-length green-black hair, and a heavy beard and mustache. His eyes are purple with white pupils, and his skin is extremely calloused.

History: Jangis Khan was one of John Grond's most faithful followers, until he saw his chance to make a living as a "freelance" killer and adventurer. He managed to leave his employer without being caught and caused a great deal of damage in his passage through the countryside until he ran into the mad Archmage known as Mickey the Great (see *The Twofold Talisman: The Heart of Light* module in DRAGON® Magazine #84).

In need of a servant for his sprawling, monster-infested mansion, Mickey caused Jangis to undergo an alignment change and made the ogre an offer he couldn't refuse (since death was the only alternative). Jangis quickly became Mickey's butler and common laborer, feeding the carnivorous plants that the Archmage raised around his lands.

It wasn't long before enough was enough. Getting to the controls of an *Apparatus of Kwalish* that Mickey had sitting around, Jangis drove the submersible craft into a nearby river and escaped.

Personality: An untalkative ogre, Jangis is essentially out to take whatever he can get from the world in the way of material wealth. He has a deep distrust of all magic-users and fears that John Grond and Mickey the Great might discover him someday and take revenge on him for his faithlessness, but he worries about little else. He does not like working with large groups, and strongly prefers the company of ogres, humans, and humanoid races.

In his travels, he has accumulated an assortment of minor magical treasures, as well as a few gems and jewels, all of which he will fight to the death to keep.

Current Residence: Unknown.

Brigga Nordmeer

Player: Georgia Moore
5th Level Half-ogre Fighter

STR: 18(00)
INT: 10
WIS: 12
DEX: 15
CON: 18
CHA: 8/16

AC normal: 1;
AC Rear: 3
Hit Points: 69
Alignment: Chaotic Neutral
Deity: Ares

Weapon Proficiencies: longsword, longbow, mace, bastard sword, heavy lance.

Special Abilities: infravision (60′), 12% chance of hearing noise, skilled at animal training.

Equipment: plate mail, shield (large), *frost brand longsword + 3, flametongue longsword + 1, longsword + 2*, heavy lance.

Description: Brigga Nordmeer is 7′ tall and weighs 375 lbs. Her stocky frame is heavily muscled, and she has a broad face with a rather flat nose. Her usual happy smile displays rows of perfectly sharpened teeth. Brigga wears her blue-black hair long, and her eyes are brown with black pupils.

History: Although she is rather young for an adventurer (16 years old), Brigga is already a formidable warrior with a gross sense of humor and an undying eagerness for fighting. She has never lost a face-to-face battle, partially because of her combat abilities and partially because she is choosy about opponents. Her birthplace and early history (as usual) are unknown.

Personality: Having discovered that no one seems to like certain humanoid races such as hobgoblins, orcs, goblins, and kobolds, she has decided to personally eliminate these races from the earth "just for fun". Even the best-armed and -armored hobgoblin is hamburger to her — in more ways than one, as she has an unfortunate habit of eating her slain opponents. Her appetite has horrified many adventuring parties and she is never invited out to dinner by any companions but the most bloodthirsty. Wherever Brigga goes, she usually carries a "light snack" from a previous battle with her.

Despite all this, Brigga is a basically fun-loving, happy individual with no ties to any home. She knows Snowy Humber and has adventured with him on several occasions; she and Snowy have a habit of chasing each other through towns in an informal game of tag, disrupting street traffic and making themselves as obnoxious as possible.

When adventuring, Brigga carries an extensive array of gear strapped to back and belts. She rides a super-heavy war horse (treat as a heavy war horse with maximum hit points) and may have one or two other horses in tow to carry more gear or treasure.

Brigga's heavy lance is a recent purchase, and she has learned to use it in such a way as to add all of her strength bonuses ("to hit" and damage) to the weapon's attack (by thrusting hard as she hits an opponent).

Current Residence: No permanent home.

Descriptions of standard magic items can be found in the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Dungeon Masters Guide, © 1979 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.
Spell descriptions can be found in the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Players Handbook, © 1978 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.
Standard "Ogre" statistics taken from ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Monster Manual, © 1978 TSR, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Fletcher's Corner

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by Michael Przytarski

Some say that the hardest part of starting a new column is finding something to write about — something so interesting that your readers will instantly become Fans for Life. I myself feel that the hardest job is finding a good name for the column. Subject matter is no problem. After all, one can always write about new ways of controlling severe player character alignment deviation. (I myself prefer a .357 Magnum for a deterrent.) But an article without a catchy title might not even be read. (Or at least other important reading material, such as the frosted flakes box at the breakfast table, may take precedence.)

Just why did I choose "Fletcher's Corner" instead of a fancy title like "The Dragon's Claw" or "The Mage's Mirror"? Beats me. You see, it all started at a convention several weeks back. I intruded on a large group of gamers who were discussing the merits of *"Divine Intervention"* vs. *"Since You Were Dumb Enough To Do It, Suffer"*. (My visit was provoked by the Star Fleet Battles players in the room below, who had complained that their star cruisers were being destroyed by falling plaster.) After quieting them down, I asked them to think of a name for a column that I was thinking of writing for the Newszine. Many good ideas were brought up, — even a few useful ones. But none brought a response like the one that now graces the top of this page. (The way I figured it, if it was hated so much by people wearing SPIDER-MAN™ and HULK™ T-shirts, imagine what normal people would think of it.) And there you are.

But where are you? Well, Fletcher's Corner will be a regular column (God willing) devoted to solving the everyday problems faced by anyone who judges role playing games. I'd like to say up front that I have no link to any major game company, professional or otherwise, so my words are not the Gospel Truth — just good common sense from someone who has more years of judging experience under his belt than he likes to admit.

Running a role playing campaign takes a firm hand, a good imagination, hours of preparation time, and a lot of patience. Every campaign has problems, but in an organization as large as the RPGA™ Network, chances are that many others have faced the same problem you have, and some have come up with solutions. I'm here to share my experience in the hopes that it will help other judges who are going through the same thing.

I'll need your help though. If YOU have come up with a good system for handling a situation discussed in this column, or if you have a problem you would like to see addressed, send it in to the Newszine. After all, I can only think up a limited number of Great Things. The rest must come from you, the readers. Give me your two cents worth, and I'll give you mine; and hopefully we'll all profit from it.

A New Beginning

Since this is the first of many installments, I thought I'd start by talking about the First Time — the First Role Playing Experience, that is. Like most, I remember my first attempt to play. Like most, I died — but not right away, and not until a fire had been kindled inside me — a fire that has burned for many years without going out. But I have seen others who have never had this fire set — not though any fault of their own, mind you, but through the actions of insensitive judges and players.

Role playing is supposed to be a reasonable facsimile of Life. In Life you get a little help to get started, and a push here and there to help you grow in the right direction. But for the most part, you have to do it on your own. Role playing should be the same way, especially if you are new to the game; and a wise judge will give the novice a little help with the game mechanics without interfering with his enjoyment. But that's easier said than done.

The First Character

Ever see a judge turn to a new player and say, "These are the books and the dice. As soon as you're ready we can start"? That's all right for those of us who have played before, and are just entering a new campaign. But for a novice it's downright depressing.

Don't make your new player learn character generation from the books. If you want to keep the first-timer's interest, take a few minutes to show him ONE (and only one) method of character generation, explaining briefly and in understandable terms what each statistic means. ("The strength score tells you how strong your character is. Nine is average, so your 16 means that you have a very strong character. Congratulations, and remind us of that when your character gets into a fight; the high strength is worth bonuses in combat.") Keep it simple and stick to the basics; don't overwhelm the novice with all the options in the book right away.

On the other side of the coin is the judge that's TOO helpful. ("You'll never survive with THAT character. You need at LEAST a 17 CON. Here, let me fix it for you.") Now I myself would have liked to change my stats when I was born, but like everyone else, I had to settle for what I am. You may think you're doing the new player a favor by improving selected statistics, but you're only confusing the issue, since he won't understand what happened when you're finished. Experienced players expect a judge to make minor adjustments to characters they bring into the campaign world, but the beginner will probably get more satisfaction out of having mastered the system, so that he can create future characters on his own, than having a character with so many bonuses that he doesn't know which one to apply first.

It's important that a brand-new player be able to identify with his character easily, so avoid obscure races and complex character types. If possible, that first character should be human. Demi-human characters are fine once you're used to them, but how can you identify with a gnome when you're six feet tall?

As for character class, the best choices are fighter and thief. Both are basic, and do not require the player to make too many decisions. Besides, they're more like real-life people. Think about it. A 1st level fighter is a person with little skill who must think and work with others to get by. The average person can role play that with no problem. A thief can fight too, and has skills that most ordinary people are familiar with. (Be sure to explain that there is a chance of failure based on the character's experience, though.)

Never, never start a first-time player with a spellcaster. Most people view magic as something of great power, so imagine how the new player must feel when his only spell fails to kill the troll, and he has to sit out the rest of the battle on his hands while others take over. Frustrated isn't the word! Let him run a simple character first, and learn the advantages and limitations of spellcasters by watching others play them.

The First Game

Thinking to protect the new character from harm, the kindly judge drops him into the campaign world and says "We can start you with these characters. They are higher in level and can protect you".

But part of the fun in role playing is feeling that you're part of the team, and that you're making a real contribution to the outcome of the story. A party of 6th-10th level characters will protect your 1st level fighter all right, but you won't get to do anything. And that means boredom. Nothing can make a new player feel like an outsider more than being totally ineffective. He wants to be part of the action as much as anyone else.

Also, although it's not always possible, it's best to avoid confusing the new player by dropping him into the middle of a major quest. That puts the rookie in a situation where he must depend on the other players for information about what's going on, and that too will hinder his ability to make a contribution to the action.

Instead, try bringing in the new character with a low-danger situation, emphasizing role playing. Small town scenarios are optimum for this; the rookie can buy equipment, meet the other characters (preferably no higher than 5th level), and get into trouble, all without being in mortal danger. That way, the new player gains confidence in his ability to control the imaginary situation.

The other players have some responsibility too. They must all be willing to help the novice learn which dice to roll for combat and so forth, but it's important that they include him in party decisions, respect his opinion, and not force his actions.

Hopefully you have always treated new players with the special respect that they deserve. If not, try some of these suggestions, or send in your own thoughts. The ideas I have presented here are by no means the only way. Many of you have found several that I have not yet mentioned, and I would like to hear them.

Remember, when you're lucky enough to have a new player in your game, make the extra effort it takes to keep him coming back. You'll be glad you did when the novice starts relating campaign stories to anyone who will listen, because that kind of appreciation makes it more enjoyable to run. And who knows? Perhaps someday you'll find yourself playing in a campaign with a judge in whom YOU kindled the fire.

A Few of My Favorite Things

Now for something completely different. This small section will be included in every installment of "Fletcher's Corner". Enjoy.

So you have a group of adventurers who like to kill anything that moves? A quick answer to this type of party is to put large red dragon* behind them. But that could result in many lost characters, and a lot of resentment toward you.

Instead, try presenting them with the following situation. The characters enter a room and see a small kobold* busily hiding a chest in a hole he has dug in the floor. He pleads for the party to leave him alone. If they persist in attacking him, they will be surprised to discover that the kobold is actually an ogre mage*, *charmed*** by the symbiotic jelly*** on the bottom of the chest. (You won't laugh once you read the description of a symbiotic jelly).

Feel free to make adjustments. If a plain, ordinary ogre mage isn't enough to give your crew a run for their money, give him a *wand of frost*****. (Of course, a little water on the floor never hurt either.) Those who survive all that, and each other, will probably be a little more friendly to what they encounter thereafter.

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DISPEL CONFUSION

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®

DQ: On page 59 of the Players Manual (D&D® Basic Set), it says that a long bow can shoot farther than any other missile weapon. However, in the "Range" subsection on page 60 it says that a crossbow can shoot farther than any other weapon. Are the given ranges for the crossbow incorrect?
DA: No, a longbow has greater range than a light crossbow, but less than a heavy crossbow (detailed in the D&D® Companion Set). But an obvious question arises: why use a crossbow?

The answer lies in medieval European history. Ranged weaponry passed through a series of evolutionary stages. The crossbow was easier to aim than the longbow, and was easily cranked up (requiring less strength to use properly). It was even banned in 1139 for being *too* effective in penetrating armor (though the ban did not last long). But well-trained, disciplined Welsh longbowmen proved to be exceptionally deadly against the forces of Henry II (circa 1120), and the longbow became standard equipment for English infantry by 1250.

In game terms, different areas of the DM's campaign world may correspond to different times and locations in our history, and what is common in one society may be rare in another. The crossbow may have been used by the Chinese as early as 2000 B.C., but the longbow was not common (except to hunters who had no heart for fierce battles) until the 13th century.

DQ: The 1980 and 1983 printing of the Basic Set are in conflict on one point. Can a thief use *any* type of weapon?
DA: As given in the revised edition, a thief can use any weapon usable with one hand, any missile weapon (most of which are two-handed), but no other two-handed weapon.

DQ: In the revised Basic Set's group adventure, what happens if there are only two player characters and both fall asleep in Room 25? (My players brought in three characters, but one died and the other two failed their Saving Throws in that room.) Should I allow the players to try their Saving Throws again, or must I reduce the effect of the magic bedroom?
DA: Modify the effect. There are several ways to do it, but I'd recommend another Saving Throw each hour or so; if successful, the victim sleepwalks across the hall to Room 26. (Note that if only one character makes the Saving Throw, he/she will soon awaken alone, and must find the other and figure out a remedy....)

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®

ADQ: Studded leather armor has the same AC as ring mail; both are "fairly bulky" (DMG page 27), and movement is the same (9") with either one. Why, then, is ring mail twice as expensive as studded leather?
ADA: It's more expensive because it's harder to make. Studded leather should also be much harder to enchant, and have a lower limit of enchantment, than all-metal (i.e. ring) armor. In general, armor involving combinations of materials (studded or scale) is harder to enchant than armor of a single material (leather, chain, or plate); note that the underpadding and straps are not considered in this "rule of thumb". Leather or ring mail could thus bear a maximum of +5 enchantment, while studded leather should have a maximum of +2 or +3 (DM's option).

ADQ: While I was reading up on hit points in the Players Handbook and the DMG, I noticed a discrepancy. On page 82 of the DMG it says that a wounded character regains 1 hp a day for 7 days (or 1 week). After that, the character regains 7 points per week, plus or minus bonuses for constitution. It also states: "Regardless of the number of hit points a character has, 4 weeks of continuous rest will restore any character to full strength". But in the Players Handbook on page 105, it says that a character regains 1 hp per day for 30 days, and thereafter regains 5 points per day. Which is correct?
ADA: Use the DMG data; it was published after the Players Handbook, and is technically a revision. (But note that, while the "last published" principle is a convenient guideline, it is not infallible.)

ADQ: When a magic-user creates a new magic item, at what level does it function? Up to what level of spells can be placed into an item?
ADA: Use the guidelines for wands, staves and rods (at 6th, 8th, and 10th levels of magic use, respectively) for similar items. (Note that a *magic missile* scroll made by a 19th level caster will produce 10 missiles (total damage of 10d4 + 10), so scrolls can be of any level.) Other items should range between 5th and 12th level in most cases.

Any level of spell can be placed in an item, but the better the effect, the more expensive the item. A device of insufficient quality will be ruined if overly powerful enchantments are attempted.

ADQ: At what level of ability does an artifact function?
ADA: Most artifacts function at 20th level unless noted otherwise. In high campaigns, the DM may (and probably should) modify this upward (probably to 25 or 30).

ADQ: Magical books, tomes, librams, etc., can raise an ability score by 1 point. What is the maximum to which a single score can be raised? In particular, are *pearls of wisdom* cumulative?
ADA: Magical books, librams, and tomes can raise ability scores above racial maxima, as can *ioun stones* (temporarily), *wishes*, and artifacts. Once beyond the racial maximum, the last "limit" is 25 — but this is impossible to reach by mortal means, magical or mundane. Lesser items cannot raise scores above racial maxima, nor can aging of any sort. Note that each such work can be used only once per character (per type of book). Rulebook lawyers may argue that certain entries in the DMG lack the "once only" phrase, but the designer's intentions are the same for all of them. Note also that a *reincarnated* or *polymorphed* character is still the same life force, and therefore still the same character (though in a different container, so to speak).

ADQ: Can a multi-classed character, or a character with two classes (fighter/thief or fighter/assassin) attack on the fighter column, use weapons limited to his class only, and at the same time gain backstab multipliers or attempt assassination?
ADA: When a character has two or more professions and the abilities of one are class-specific in any way (such as thief abilities), special effects gained thereby apply only when all restrictions of that class are also

applied. Thus, a thief gains backstabbing multipliers only when attacking as a thief, using the thief "to hit" chart, and using a club, dagger, or sword.

While we're on the topic of thieves, here are a few other observations. Though the books are not explicit about it, backstabbing multipliers should be given for melee only; a club or dagger may certainly be thrown, and with the +4 bonus for a surprise rear attack, but no multiplier applies. In the case of surprise segments, only the first attack is fully by surprise; if it misses, subsequent hits still within the "surprise segments" period do not gain the multiplier (though such attacks may still gain the standard +2 bonus "to hit" vs. the opponent's rear).

And finally, the DM's judgment is required when a thief is using a magically glowing sword or dagger (which, even if invisible, sheds visible light). First, the DM must decide whether such light is of torch-light strength (as the *light* spell) or nearly full daylight (as the *continual* effect). Second, the DM must consider the victim's sensory capabilities; certain monsters have no sense of light. (These are usually even harder to surprise, though, as they depend on sensations of temperature, air movements, *et. al.* for sensory input.) When the victim is a creature with eyes or the equivalent, and the thief is employing a glowing weapon of light intensity equal to or less than that of the surroundings, the thief might (due to *invisibility*, position, etc.) be able to gain complete surprise, and therefore the backstab multiplier. But when the weapon light is more intense than that of the surroundings, no "total surprise" is possible, and no backstab multiplier will apply.

ADQ: If a fighter has 18(00) strength normally, does he need *gauntlets of ogre power* to gain the double strength bonus allowed with magical war hammers?
ADA: Yes; the requirements given for the hammers are specific, and their exceptional effects involve more factors than mere brute strength.

MHQ: Can you make up a DC character for the MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ Game?
MHA: No. Under our agreement with Marvel Comics Group we have permission to use the many minions of the Marvel Universe™. Those that belong to other companies such as DC or First are *their* property and outside both our legal rights and the scope of the game. (Of course, if you want to create heroes from other areas for your own personal use, that's OK. Just don't tell us.)

MHQ: Can you create your own characters for the game?
MHA: Check Chapter 4, "The Orgin of..." in the campaign book for guidelines.

MHQ: Do you regain Health all at once, or just a little at a time?
MHA: The amount of Health you regain is dependent on your Endurance. In general, you regain your Endurance rank number in Health every day, unless otherwise specified in the adventure. This usually taken all at once, while the character is resting.

MHQ: Are character sheets available for the game?
MHA: Not at this time. You have permission to photocopy the character sheet provided in the Campaign book (page 47) for your use in the game. Character sheets may become available later.

MHQ: How do you determine how many points of damage you do with body transformation into energy forms, or ice, fire, etc.?
MHA: In general, your character can do up to the ability rank of the body transformation power. An energy-creature of Unearthly ability could do up to Unearthly damage to someone he is fighting directly. (Body transformation does NOT give you missile attacks.) Specific heroes of the Marvel Universe, such as Iceman™, are exceptions to the rule. The effects of their abilities are listed.

MHQ: How do you get the issues of Marvel Comics pertaining to the origins of all the comic book heroes and villains ever created?
MHA: That's a tall order. In the past year, Marvel has put out the Official Handbook of the Marvel Universe™, a 15-part comic book devoted to nothing BUT the heroes and villains of the Marvel Universe. OHOTMU, as it is called, is the basis for many of our own judgements of how strong/fast/powerful the heroes are. These comics may be available through your local direct-sale comic merchant, but if not, know that the folk at Mighty Marvel are currently at work on an expanded second series of the book, to be released this spring.

MHQ: On Table 27 in your Campaign Book, you show the minimum number of powers to be two (three for altered humans). However, your character cards for the Thing™ and Captain America™ show them as having one power each, where they should have three for being altered humans. Do they combine their three power rolls into one, big power? Or is there another reason?
MHA: The reason is that Ben, Cap and all the rest are not created by any random-roll system. They are real members of the Marvel Universe, and rather than make their abilities jive with the system, we tailor the system to fit their specific abilities. Ben Grimm has several neat abilities, but only one "Power" (his body armor) because in his book he has just that. The same applies to Cap and his shield.

MHQ: As a judge, can I make up new powers? I am trying to design the Hell-fire Club™ but I can't find any power resembling Sebastian Shaw's™.
MHA: As judge you may create any power you see fit for use in the game, as long as it does not imbalance the system or make it less enjoyable for the players. Many Marvel characters, like Sebastian Shaw, have unique abilities that are beyond the bonds of randomly created heroes.

Shaw, by the way, has the ability to convert kinetic energy into physical strength and Health. Whenever he is physically attacked (slugfest, charging, concussive rays), that damage is immediately added to his Health. His Health can reach 400 in this manner. He may redirect energy into an attack, inflicting up to Unearthly damage in one round. The energy dissapates in 10 rounds, but all damage is taken off the excess amount first, then his own Health. Shaw can be hurt by energy attacks and by wrestling. (Nightcrawler™ once gave him a run for his money).

(Note: The above was taken from the first draft of "Project: Wideawake", a roster of Marvel's Merry Mutants, available in stores near you!)

MHQ: In your Campaign Book, you say that Nightcrawler has both a Typical strength and an Excellent strength. The Official Handbook of the Marvel Universe, on the other hand, says he can lift 250 lbs., which is a little above what you call Typical.
MHA: This is what you call a "Gremlin" or "Typo". Nightcrawler's Strength is only Typical, even though it is listed in two places in those booklets. The OHOTMU lists his ability as 250 lbs, so we rounded down in this case, as letting him left 400 lbs was out of line.

MHQ: Wolverine's™ claws are described as doing Excellent damage, but I have seen him cut through Amazing materials in the X-MEN™. This would mean that he would have had to make a RED feat to accomplish these tasks (a bit harder than I had imagined).
MHA: That's a problem I recently addressed in one of the "Marvel-Philes", a series of articles in Dragon® Magazine devoted to the Game. Wolverine does Excellent damage with his claws, but the Claws are made of Unearthly material. If it's a question of his claws against a material such as steel plate, use the Unearthly value for cutting through. If it's against a target with Health, use the Excellent damage. Note that Logan™ could shred the armor of a Sentinel™ or villain in a battle-suit one round, then go after the man the second. Okay?

MHQ: Would unique weapons shift two columns for damage, or just for hitting?
MHA: Unique weapons generally give a two-column shift to hit ONLY. Damage is dictated by the weapon, or by the user's Strength.

STAR TREK®: THE ROLE PLAYING GAME

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by Errol Farstad

*"Space...the final frontier. These are the voyages of the Starship Enterprise. Its five year mission: to explore strange new worlds, to seek out new life and new civilizations, to boldly go where no man has gone before..."** These are the first words you heard on most episodes of the popular STAR TREK® TV-series; they are also the first words you read inside basic books of STAR TREK®: The Role Playing Game*.

Game versions of movies and TV-shows often lose the special "flavor" that made the original great — and I had no reason to think that STAR TREK: The Role Playing Game (FASA, $25.00 for boxed set, complete) would be an exception to the rule. I also felt that $25.00 was too much to pay for a single-box role playing game! But this time I was pleasantly surprised.

Packaging

Rating: 8

While the colors do not jump out, the excellent likenesses of Kirk* and Spock* gazing calmly outward, the Enterprise* suspended in the background, and the familiar logo emblazoned across the top combine to make the box quite eye-catching. It is just as well the composition of the artwork was done in this manner, for a certain amount of dignity must be preserved to maintain the essence of this game. (I would hate to have the Enterprise ready to fire photon torpedos into my derriere!)

I understand that the game is (or has been) revised. The set I purchased contains the basic rule book; the Adventure Book; a sturdy (thick paper) 22"*32" hex grid of "the final frontier"; colorful, durable cardboard counters representing various aspects of the game and its people; a very detailed map of a Constitution Class* starship; and "monitor boards" for the bridge crew signifying particular stations.

Rules and Explanations

Rating: 7

The rules are generally well-written and clear, though there seems to be a problem understanding a few of the die rolls (see "Miscellaneous", below). The only dice needed for this game are two ten-siders, a blessing indeed for those of us who have tired of keeping track of multiple dice with multiple sides.

At gamemaster option, you can role-play your favorite character from the series, or you can create your own with a simple character generation system. Each character has seven attributes, and can choose from six Federation* races (each with its own set of modifiers): Human, Vulcan*, Andorian*, Catian*, Edoan*, and Tellarite*. Over 50 skills, from Administration to Zoology, are available to round out your character's specialties. Each is explained simply and with as much detail as a layman would need. Other character-related detail includes equipment, weapons, medical aid and combat. The sample character sheet provided in the basic book can be photocopied for personal use.

There are two types of combat in STAR TREK: The Role Playing Game; personal and starship combat. In personal combat, dexterity and skill determine the number of actions each combatant may perform (including parrying, firing a weapon, flying tackle, etc.), with a certain number of action points allotted to each action. Starship combat is just as easy to master, and relies on the players working together as a team (which explains why the rapport of the Enterprise crew is legendary).

Degree of Difficulty

Rating: 1-2

I've mentioned earlier how easy it is for players to learn this game. Game masters, however, should read the rules thoroughly before starting. While no experience is necessary to play, the game master should be able to locate pertinent data quickly to avoid slowing down the game.

Miscellaneous

Rating: 8

1. Application of Modifiers. There seems to be a problem with the die rolls for Vulcan mind techniques and Medical aid. Near as I can figure out, the modifiers are applied *after* the roll is made for these, while modifiers for combat are applied *before* the roll. Although it's not a major flaw, it could make a big difference if you get the two confused.

Example: suppose a character has a 50% chance of success and it is determined that a modifier of -10 applies to the action in question. The player rolls 59 on 2d10.

a) If the action being attempted is a Vulcan mind technique, the -10 modifier is applied to the player's die roll, for an adjusted result of 59-10 = 49, which indicates success.

b) Now suppose the same situation occurs in combat. This time, the modifier is applied to the base chance before the die roll is made, so the chance of success is 50-10 = 40%, and the player's roll of 59 is a failure.

2. Organization. While the game does seem to be well-organized, I felt that it needed a good, detailed cross-reference index of all sections and tables so that GMs wouldn't have to slow down the action while searching for applicable details.

3. Background Information. Plenty of useful background is given, including a general history of the UFP*, GM suggestions, a few ideas for adventures, racial histories (including Romulan* and Klingon*), and a list that's too long to ennumerate of other information on the known universe.

4. Artwork. The artwork is quite good, and the items illustrated are easily identifiable. The only bad point is the rather unsuitable photograph of a plastic model of a Klingon D-7 Battlecruiser* in the Adventure Book. Perhaps the creators were rushed for time and were unable to procure a decent action shot of the Klingon ship from the series, but then again, maybe not. Now, if you will all excuse me, I have to answer a distress call. It seems that the Klingons have been invaded by a horde of Warrior-Tribbles*, led by Cyrano Jones* and Harry Mudd*, and my ship has been dispatched to stop them before it becomes a galactic incident. 'Til next ish, fellow gamers, don't let your molecules get scrambled!

(NEXT: More STAR TREK action with the Klingons! Also: a hard look at PC sheets available for general fantasy role playing games, and PARANOIA, a new RPG.)

Final Rating
STAR TREK®:
The Role Playing Game

Each category is rated on a scale of 1-10, where 10 is the highest possible, except Degree of Difficulty, which is rated from 1 (beginner) to 4 (expert).

Category	Rating
Packaging	8
Rules & Explanations	7
Degree of Difficulty	1-2
Miscellaneous	8
Overall	8

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